Missourians' Views of Key Health Issues

Key Findings of Statewide Opinion Research
April 2024

320-1122

Survey Methodology

Dates	March 2-18, 2024
Survey Type	Dual-mode resident survey
Research Population	Adult residents of Missouri
Total Interviews	1,719 statewide including 1,519 in the MFH service area, 200 in the remainder of the state and 345 among BIPOC Missourians
Margin of Sampling Error	$\pm$2.4% at the 95% Confidence Level
Contact Methods	Telephone Calls Email Invitations Text Invitations
Data Collection Modes	Telephone Interviews Online Interviews
Languages	English and Spanish

(Note: Not All Results Will Sum to 100% Due to Rounding)

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Focus Group Approach

- Eight focus groups were conducted among Missouri residents in November 2023.

- Each session lasted approximately two hours and consisted of a small group discussion of up to 10 people.

- Groups were segmented by geography and by gender or ethnicity.

Group Date	Group Location	Group Profile
November 13, 2023	St. Louis	Mixed Gender
November 13, 2023	St. Louis	Black/African American
November 14, 2023	Hannibal	Women
November 14, 2023	Hannibal	Men
November 15, 2023	Cape Girardeau	BIPOC
November 15, 2023	Cape Girardeau	Mixed Gender
November 16, 2023	Springfield	Women
November 16, 2023	Springfield	Men

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Online Discussion Group Approach
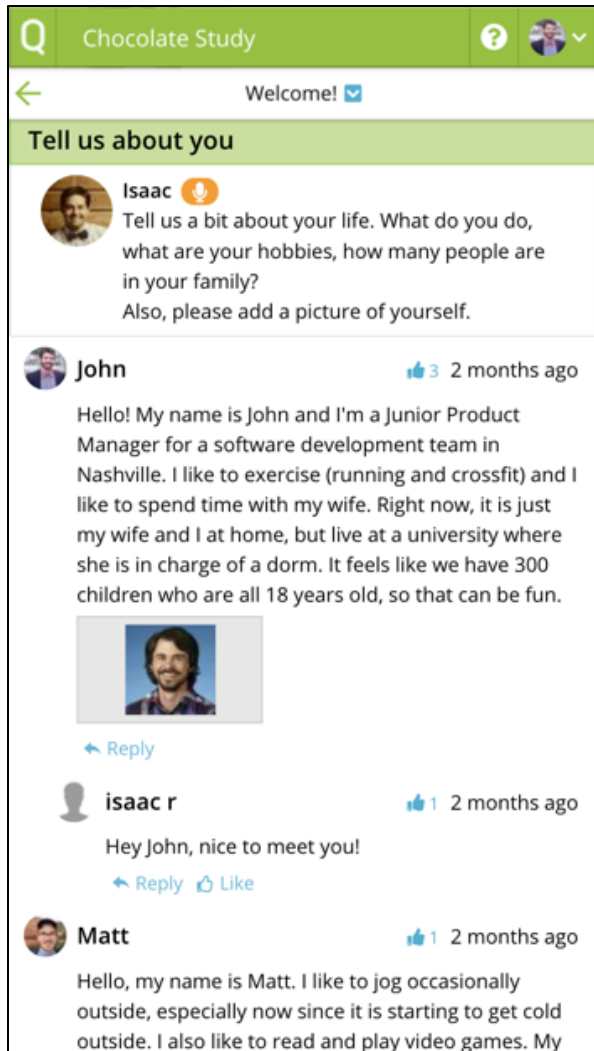
Sample Interface

- The session took place online from January 9-11, 2024, with questions posted twice a day for three days.

- Respondents could reply at their leisure, including responding to probes from the moderator.

- The session included 25 residents from small towns and rural areas in Missouri.

- Respondents represented a mix of ages, genders, ethnicities, parties, and political ideologies

Seven Key Takeaways from the Research

1. The top concerns for state residents include **the cost of living, the cost of healthcare, drug and alcohol abuse** and **mental health**.

2. Despite these concerns, most describe their communities in positive terms and **feel a sense of belonging** – particularly in their church/faith community.

3. Only **one-quarter of Missourians report living comfortably and saving**; residents view the ability to afford day-to-day expenses as a much betterer indicator of the strength of the economy than the stock market or other broader economic factors.

4. Residents are far more likely to see **not having enough *good* jobs as a key problem**, as opposed to not having *enough* jobs for people who want one.

5. Missourians view **good jobs, low levels of crime, and treating people with respect as key contributors to community health**; and they also widely agree that community conditions have a significant effect on personal health.

6. At the same time, while they widely acknowledge the influence of societal factors, Missourians also believe that **individuals have control over their own health**.

7. Two-thirds say it is **easy to obtain access to physical healthcare**; **far fewer say accessing mental healthcare is easy.** Communities that are historically marginalized – like those with low-incomes, LGBTQ+ and those living with a disability – are more likely to experience difficulty in getting care.

Views of Life in Missouri

Most residents of Missouri are likely to recommend it as a place to live.

How likely would you be to recommend Missouri to a friend or family member as a place to live? Please use a scale of 1 to 10, where a 1 means not at all likely and a 10 means very likely.

Rating	Percentage
10 (Very likely)	23%
9	6%
8	15%
7	13%
6	8%
5	13%
4	5%
3	4%
2	2%
1 (Not at all likely)	10%
Don't know/Refused	1%

Mean Score 6.6
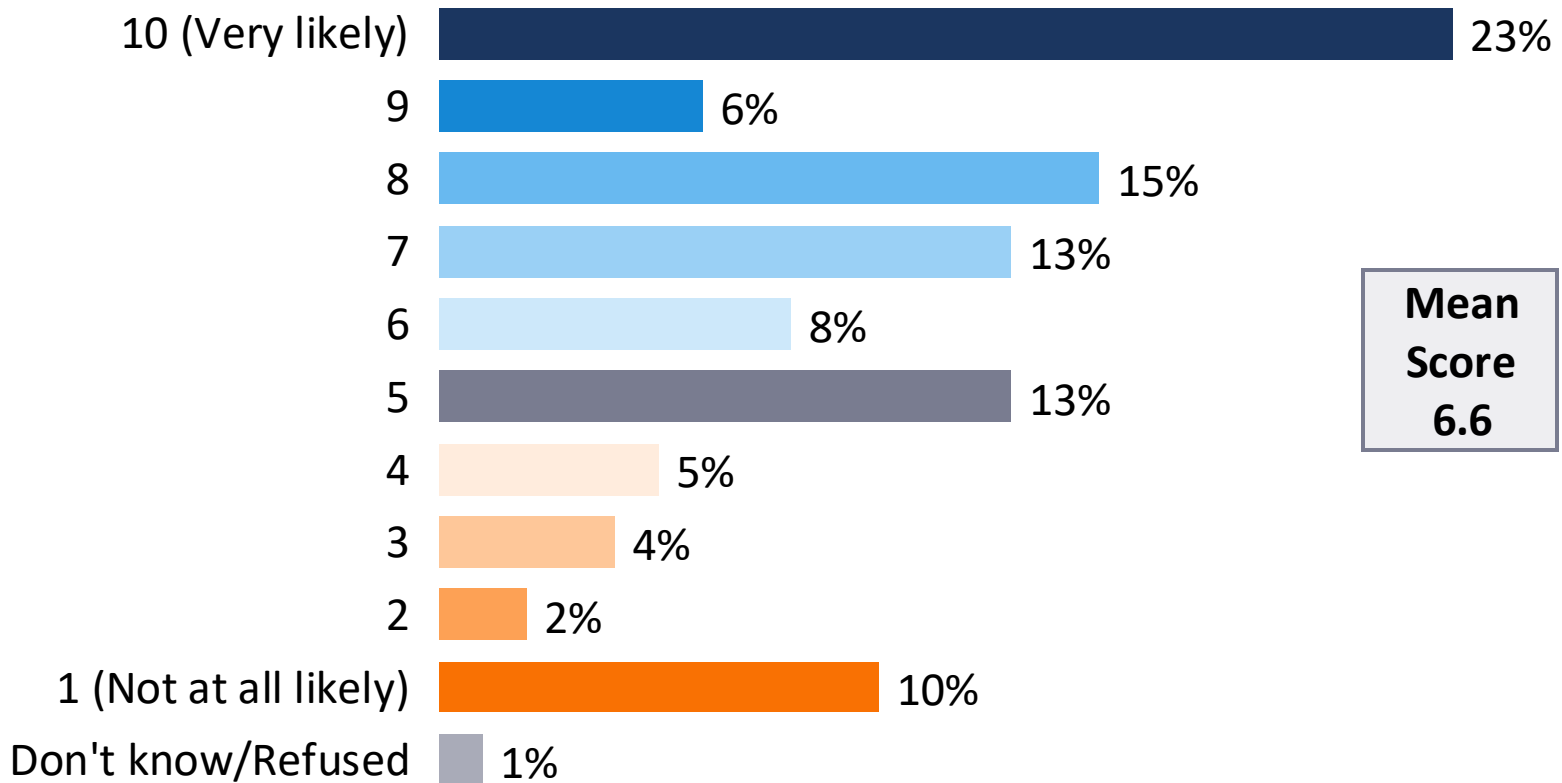
Public safety, cost of living and the economy are seen as the top issues in the state.

In a few words of your own, what is the most important issue facing Missouri right now?

(Open-ended)

Issue	Percentage
Public safety/Crime	18%
Cost of Living/Inflation in general	14%
Economy/Jobs/Bad wages/Workers' rights	14%
Reproductive rights/Abortion	11%
Education	8%
Taxes	7%
Immigration	6%
Conservative politics/getting rid of Donald Trump	6%
Failures of Democracy/Corrupt politicians don't represent the people	6%
Social justice/racism/police discrimination/Criminal Justice reform	5%
Health care/Health insurance/Health/Mental health	5%
Drug/substance abuse	4%
Government/Politics	4%
Roads/Traffic/Public transit/Infrastructure	4%
Democrat Government/Liberal politics	4%
Homelessness	3%
Housing affordability	3%
Climate change/Environment	2%
Fiscal issues	2%
Social security/Welfare policies	2%

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Verbatim Comments Describing the Top Issues in the State

It is violence like homicide, murder, running red lights and running people over.

I would say worker's rights. They have the right to organize unions.

It is about immigration. It is illegal immigration and drugs. There are a lot of users on the street. It is dangerous in Missouri right now.

It is the economy. I would say the cost of living and food to eat. It is skyrocketing.

Drug use, ease of access to drugs for those in school and young adults.

I would say women's rights or health care rights, specifically safe access to abortion and birth control rights.

Healthcare affordability. I believe that's an issue for the US as a whole. But Missouri could do better for its people.

It is inflation because the price of everything is going up, and the value of my dollars spent is giving me less and less.

The housing costs…it is really expensive for anybody to rent a place or buy a home. They need to build more housing stock.

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Q10. In a few words of your own, what is the most important issue facing Missouri right now?

The rising cost of living and the cost of healthcare are the top problems facing the state.

I'd like to read you some problems facing Missouri that people have mentioned. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem in Missouri.

■ Ext. Ser. Prob. ■ Very Ser. Prob. ■ Smwt. Ser. Prob. ■ Not Too Ser. Prob. ■ Don't Know

Ext./Very Ser. Prob.

Problem	Ext. Ser.	Very Ser.	Smwt. Ser.	Not Too Ser.	Ext./Very Ser. Prob.
The rising cost of living	40%	31%	21%	8%	**71%**
The cost of healthcare	35%	31%	21%	9%	**67%**
Drug and alcohol use	28%	34%	27%	11%	**61%**
Mental health	31%	28%	28%	11%	**59%**
The cost of housing	29%	30%	28%	11%	**59%**
Homelessness	28%	31%	31%	9%	**59%**
Crime, in general	28%	27%	33%	11%	**55%**
Gun violence	33%	21%	21%	24%	**54%**
Violent crime	28%	26%	30%	16%	**54%**

Q11. Split Sample

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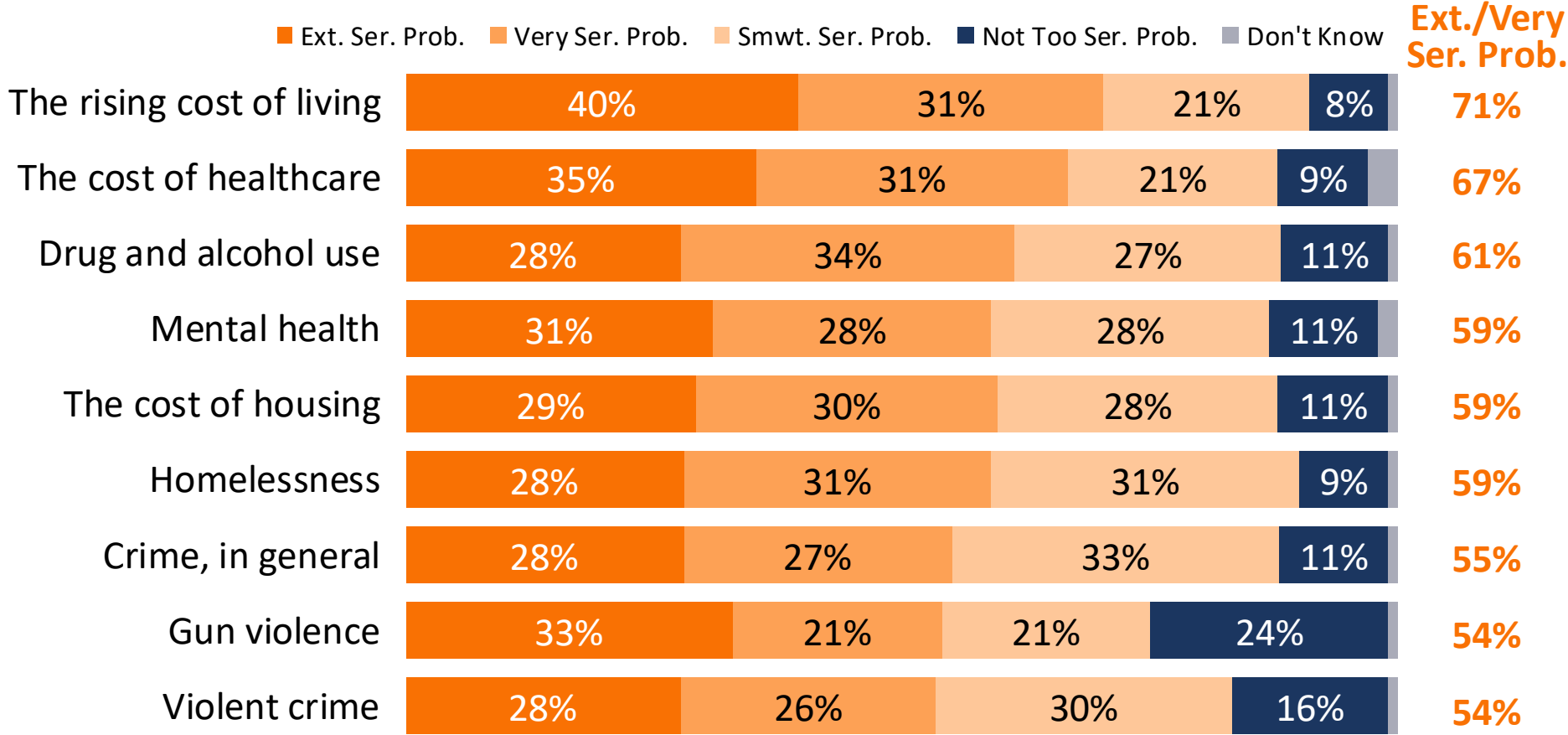
Issues that are typically politically polarizing are seen as less serious, on average.

Legend: ■ Ext. Ser. Prob. ■ Very Ser. Prob. ■ Smwt. Ser. Prob. ■ Not Too Ser. Prob. ■ Don't Know

Ext./Very Ser. Prob.

Issue	Ext. Ser.	Very Ser.	Smwt. Ser.	Not Too Ser.	Don't Know	Ext./Very Ser. Prob.
A lack of well-paid jobs with benefits	23%	27%	30%	18%		50%
Restrictions on reproductive rights	32%	16%	16%	29%	8%	48%
Racial bias and discrimination	18%	23%	28%	30%		41%
Illegal immigration	23%	15%	19%	38%	5%	38%
The availability of healthcare	16%	22%	31%	29%		38%
Climate change	15%	20%	22%	39%		36%
Hunger	11%	23%	40%	24%		34%
Police violence and misconduct	13%	19%	24%	40%		32%
Social isolation and loneliness	9%	18%	32%	35%	6%	27%
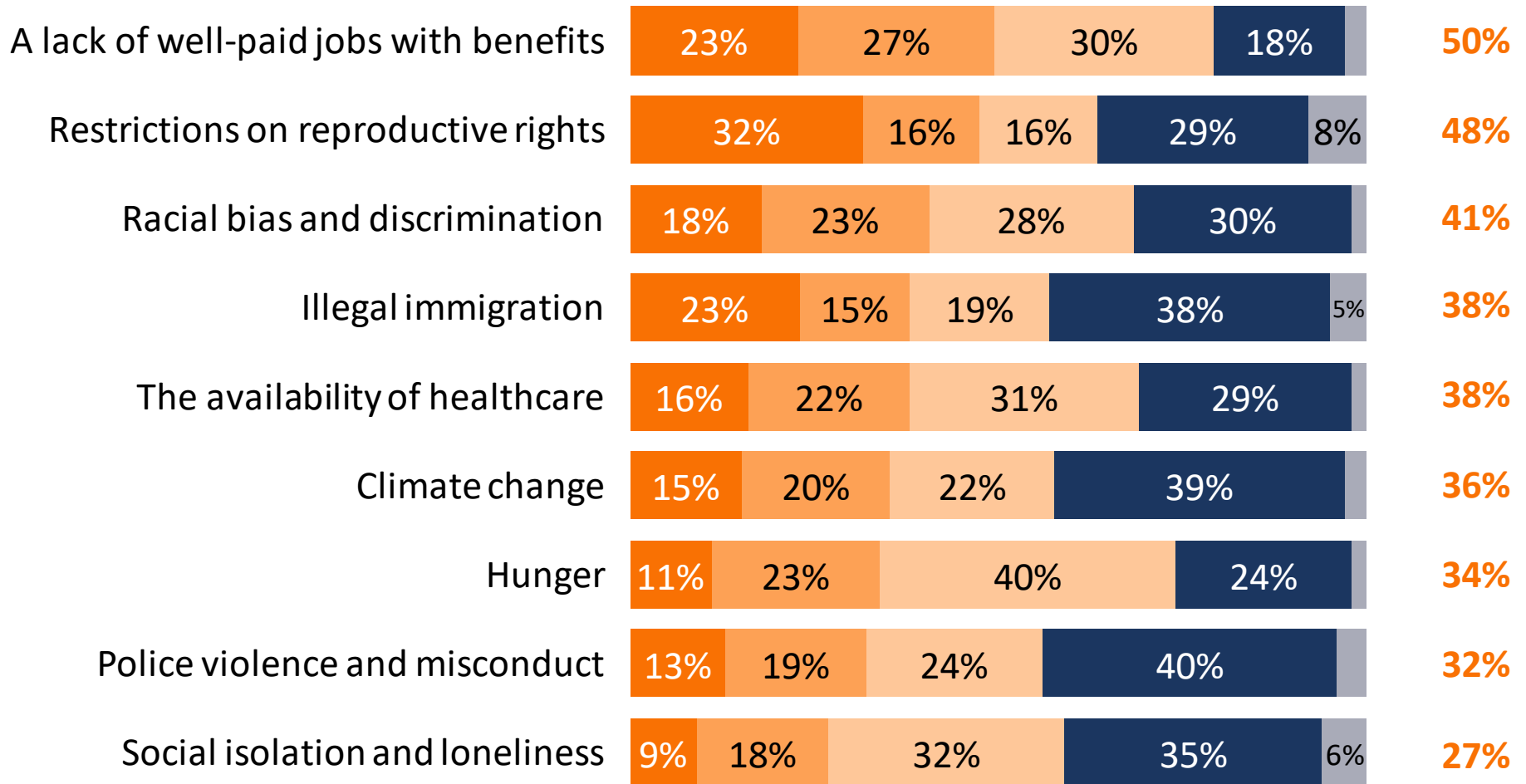
Q11. I'd like to read you some problems facing Missouri that people have mentioned. Please tell me whether you think it is an extremely serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem in Missouri. Split Sample

Black Missourians are especially concerned about gun violence and crime.

Problem	Extremely/Very Serious Problem			
	All Residents	Race/Ethnicity		
		White	Black/African American	All BIPOC
The rising cost of living	**71%**	71%	78%	71%
The cost of healthcare	**67%**	69%	63%	59%
Drug and alcohol use	**61%**	60%	72%	68%
Mental health	**59%**	57%	76%	67%
The cost of housing	**59%**	58%	67%	64%
Homelessness	**59%**	58%	71%	61%
Crime, in general	**55%**	53%	**80%**	61%
Gun violence	**54%**	50%	**83%**	68%
Violent crime	**54%**	50%	77%	67%
A lack of well-paid jobs with benefits	**50%**	48%	61%	57%
Restrictions on reproductive rights	**48%**	48%	60%	48%
Racial bias and discrimination	**41%**	36%	71%	58%
Illegal immigration	**38%**	39%	30%	36%
The availability of healthcare	**38%**	38%	44%	38%
Climate change	**36%**	38%	32%	28%
Hunger	**34%**	32%	41%	41%
Police violence and misconduct	**32%**	29%	60%	41%
Social isolation and loneliness	**27%**	25%	33%	35%

ly serious problem, a very serious problem, somewhat serious problem, or not too serious a problem in Missouri. Split Sample

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Democrats are especially concerned about guns and reproductive rights; Republicans with cost of living and illegal immigration.

Problem	Extremely/Very Serious Problem			
	All Residents	**Political Party**		
		Democrats	**Independents**	**Republicans**
The rising cost of living	**71%**	59%	**71%**	**82%**
The cost of healthcare	**67%**	**72%**	**62%**	**65%**
Drug and alcohol use	**61%**	**61%**	**66%**	59%
Mental health	**59%**	**69%**	**60%**	50%
The cost of housing	**59%**	**60%**	58%	59%
Homelessness	**59%**	**68%**	**62%**	48%
Crime, in general	**55%**	50%	55%	**60%**
Gun violence	**54%**	**83%**	52%	30%
Violent crime	**54%**	**61%**	59%	45%
A lack of well-paid jobs with benefits	**50%**	54%	55%	43%
Restrictions on reproductive rights	**48%**	**81%**	48%	18%
Racial bias and discrimination	**41%**	**66%**	38%	21%
Illegal immigration	**38%**	12%	37%	**62%**
The availability of healthcare	**38%**	49%	38%	29%
Climate change	**36%**	**65%**	38%	8%
Hunger	**34%**	43%	34%	27%
Police violence and misconduct	**32%**	48%	35%	15%
Social isolation and loneliness	**27%**	26%	33%	24%

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Respondents in the MFH service area rank problems similarly to those in other areas of the state.

Problem	Extremely/Very Serious Problem		
	All Residents	**Region**	
		MFH Area	**Balance of State**
The rising cost of living	**71%**	71%	73%
The cost of healthcare	**67%**	66%	71%
Drug and alcohol use	**61%**	62%	59%
Mental health	**59%**	59%	61%
The cost of housing	**59%**	59%	60%
Homelessness	**59%**	56%	68%
Crime, in general	**55%**	56%	53%
Gun violence	**54%**	51%	65%
Violent crime	**54%**	55%	51%
A lack of well-paid jobs with benefits	**50%**	49%	52%
Restrictions on reproductive rights	**48%**	47%	51%
Racial bias and discrimination	**41%**	39%	47%
Illegal immigration	**38%**	39%	36%
The availability of healthcare	**38%**	39%	34%
Climate change	**36%**	34%	43%
Hunger	**34%**	35%	32%
Police violence and misconduct	**32%**	31%	35%
Social isolation and loneliness	**27%**	26%	30%

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Consistent with the survey findings, focus group and QualBoard respondents worried most about the cost of living and of housing.

- In addition to the high cost of living and of housing, participants worried about homelessness, mental health, drug addiction and crime.
- Focus group participants, who were predominantly living in urban areas of the state were more pessimistic than optimistic about its direction.
- QualBoard participants, who were primarily from small town and rural areas, were also divided on the direction of the state; those who felt positively attributed it to a strong and growing economy.

Hannibal Male: If you buy your own home, first of all the cost of houses have gone up like double, in some places triple, it depends on what neighborhood you're moving into.

St. Louis Female: I have 10 children. My husband has a decent job, but we live paycheck to paycheck. It wasn't always so bad, but it's just getting really hard to buy food and things. We don't live extravagantly. I'm just trying to figure out why that is.

QualBoard Female: Chaos. The fentanyl overdose crisis has been on the rise…really bad.

Missourians' Perceptions of Their Communities

Missourians most often describe their community as safe and welcoming, but also as impoverished and rural.

If you had to describe your community in two or three words or phrases, which would you choose?
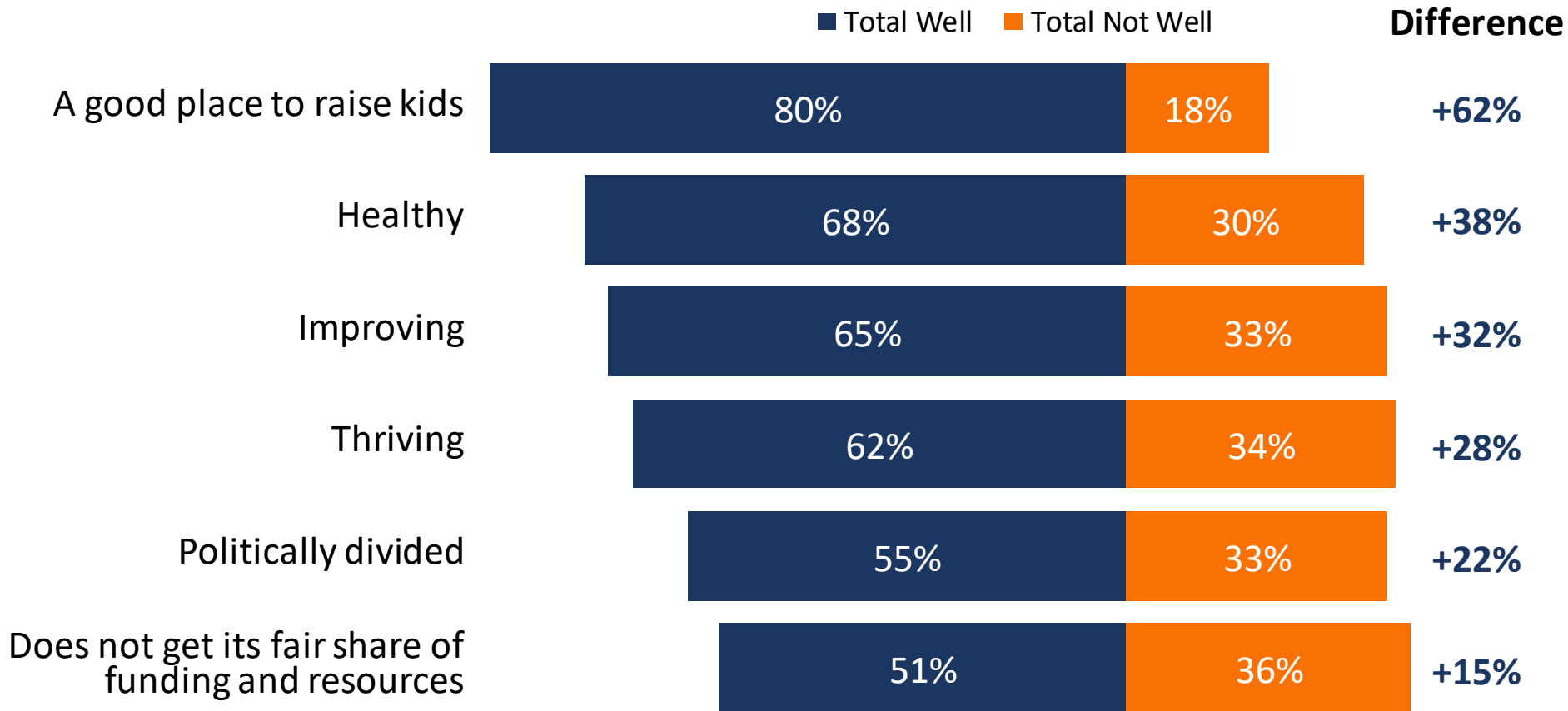*(Open-ended)*

Safe/peaceful/welcoming /Sense of community/Relaxing	34%
Impoverished/Lack of jobs/Decaying infrastructure/Unsafe	22%
Rural/Small town/Farming community/Lots of outdoor recreation	18%
General positive mention about the community (i.e. good, nice, etc.)	14%
Liberal/Progressive values/Diverse	9%
High income/Clean/Privilege	6%
Hardworking/Down to earth/Independent	4%
Decent/boring	4%
Conservative values	4%
Poor leaders/high taxes/bad governing issues	3%
It is a sub-urban area/mixed of rural and urban community	3%
Convenient/Good for families	3%
Not Diverse	3%
Lack of togetherness/doesn't have a sense of community	2%
Urban	2%
Overly populated/too many people living in the community	2%

The word "safe" was volunteered more than any other.

Missourians widely view their communities as "a good place to raise kids."

I'm going to read you a list of words and phrases; please tell me how well you think it describes your community: very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all.

■ Total Well ■ Total Not Well

Difference

Phrase	Total Well	Total Not Well	Difference
A good place to raise kids	80%	18%	**+62%**
Healthy	68%	30%	**+38%**
Improving	65%	33%	**+32%**
Thriving	62%	34%	**+28%**
Politically divided	55%	33%	**+22%**
Does not get its fair share of funding and resources	51%	36%	**+15%**

Q13.

White respondents offer more broadly positive evaluations of their communities.

Word/Phrase	All Residents	Race/Ethnicity			Gender	
	Total Well	White	Black	BIPOC	Men	Women
A good place to raise kids	**80%**	83%	63%	69%	83%	77%
Healthy	**68%**	71%	60%	59%	74%	62%
Improving	**65%**	65%	59%	61%	68%	62%
Thriving	**62%**	65%	53%	52%	67%	60%
Politically divided	**55%**	56%	55%	55%	57%	54%
Does not get its fair share of funding and resources	**51%**	52%	47%	48%	50%	53%

Q13. I'm going to read you a list of words and phrases; please tell me how well you think it describes your community: very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all.

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Democrats are more likely to view their community as "politically divided" than are independents and Republicans.

Word/Phrase	Total Well					
	All Residents	Party			Region	
		Dems.	**Inds.**	**Reps.**	**MFH Area**	**Balance of State**
A good place to raise kids	**80%**	77%	73%	88%	79%	85%
Healthy	**68%**	66%	62%	73%	67%	70%
Improving	**65%**	64%	61%	67%	64%	67%
Thriving	**62%**	59%	59%	67%	62%	62%
Politically divided	**55%**	65%	51%	50%	55%	57%
Does not get its fair share of funding and resources	**51%**	54%	49%	50%	50%	54%

Q13. I'm going to read you a list of words and phrases; please tell me how well you think it describes your community: very well, somewhat well, not too well, or not well at all.

Many qualitative participants felt a sense of belonging in public places, including church and school, but several also experienced exclusion and discrimination in their communities.

- Participants in focus groups felt that community connections were eroding over time.
- QualBoard participants attributed the change in community connections to people increasingly spending time online.
- Some who felt excluded in their community pointed to having liberal/ Democratic political views or felt excluded because of their LGBTQ+ identity.
- A few noted they felt excluded either because they hadn't lived in the area long-term, or, in contrast, because everyone in their town knew their history.
- A number of participants in qualitative sessions had experienced outright discrimination because of their race, sexual orientation, or weight.

Cape Girardeau BIPOC: Everyone's got a cell phone, but I bet you they don't know how to phone their neighbors; no one can text their neighbors.

QualBoard Female: Two places I feel like I physically belong are my church and the public library. My church is very welcoming and even though most of the people are senior citizens, I at 30 years old still feel very loved and valued.

QualBoard Male: I've been called all the gay slurs; I really never feel safe here.

Missourians report being engaged in their communities in a variety of ways, are most notably as a member of a church or faith community and through volunteering.

Are you involved in your community in any of the following ways:
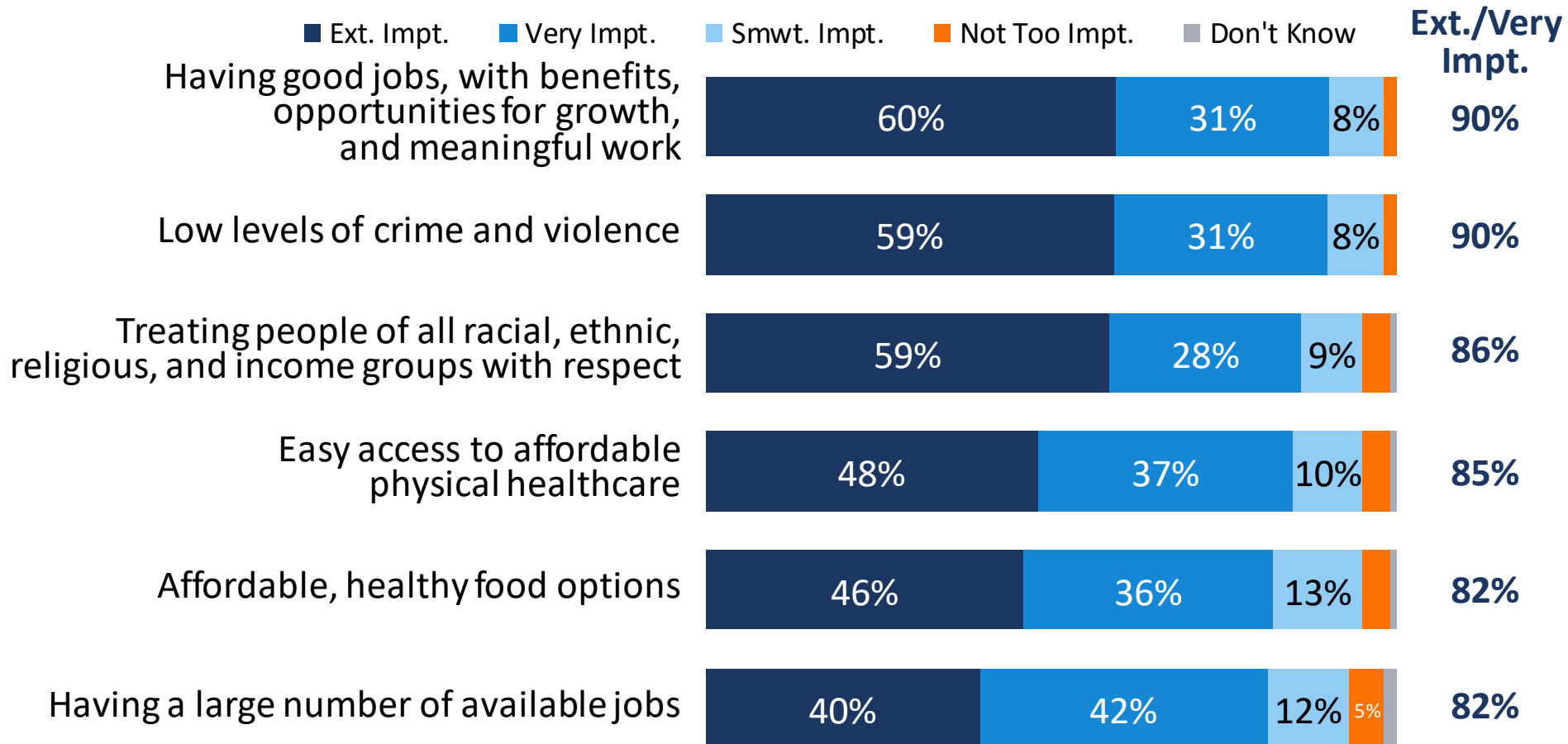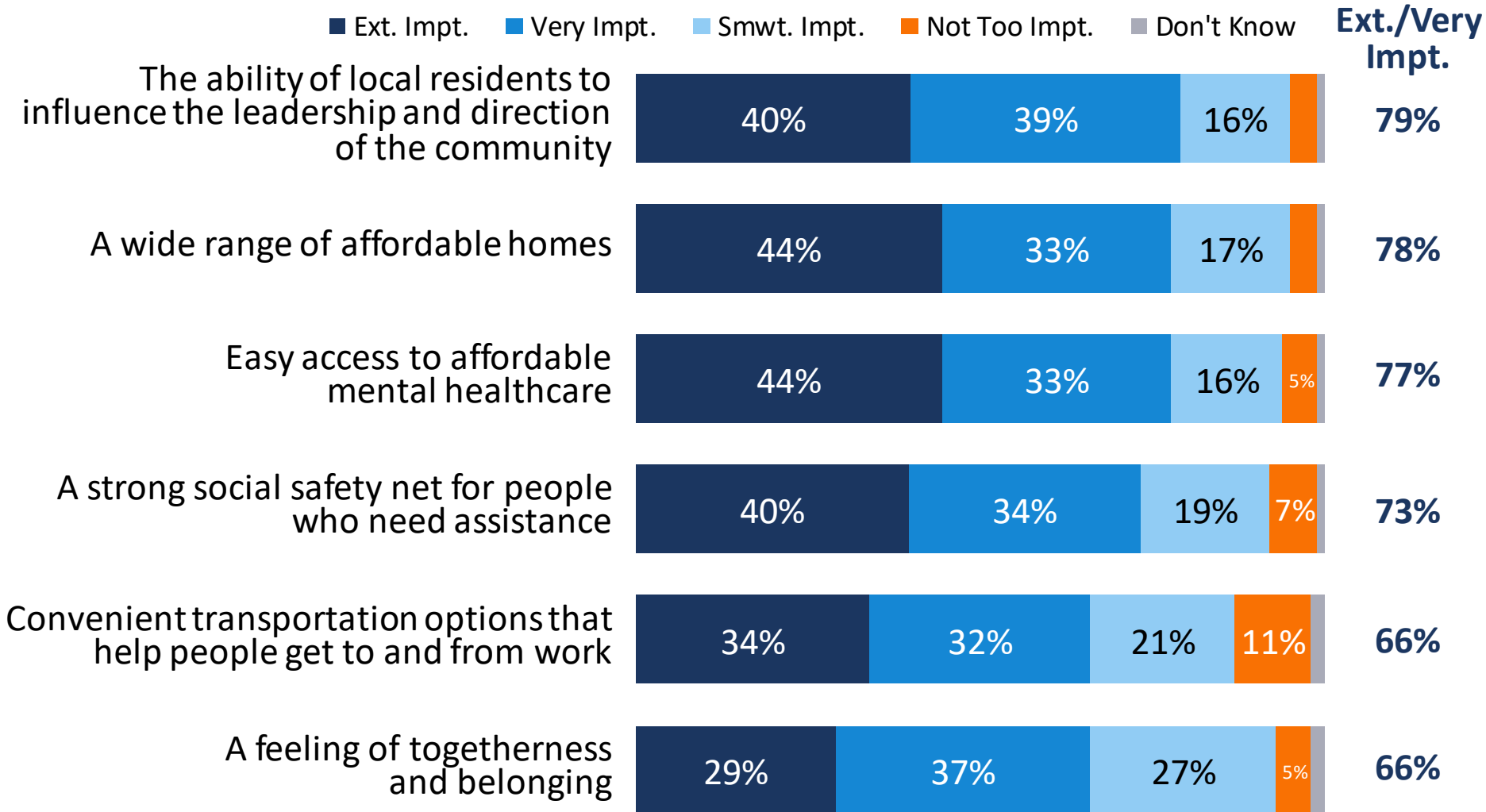
(Multiple Responses Accepted)

A member of a church or faith community	40%
Volunteering	31%
Involved in another way	25%
A member of a nonprofit or charitable organization	24%
A member of PTA or involved in local schools	13%
Active in local politics and community meetings	13%
An active member of a homeowners association	12%
Don't know	26%

Q30.

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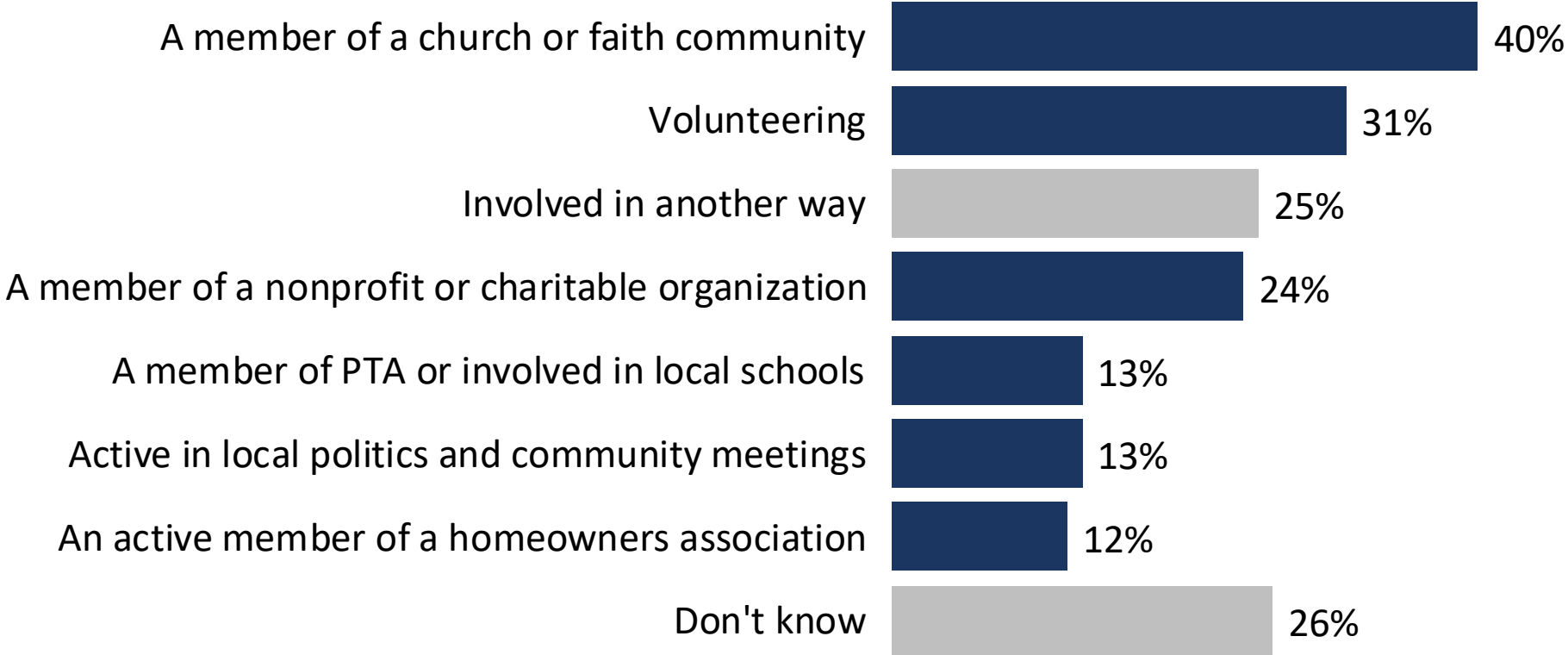
Factors That Lead to Healthy Communities

Missourians recognize a wide variety of factors that contribute to making a community healthy.

Here is a list of factors that may contribute to making a community healthy. Please indicate whether you consider it to be extremely, very, somewhat, or not too important to making a community healthy.

	Ext. Impt.	Very Impt.	Smwt. Impt.	Not Too Impt.	Don't Know	**Ext./Very Impt.**
Having good jobs, with benefits, opportunities for growth, and meaningful work	60%	31%	8%			**90%**
Low levels of crime and violence	59%	31%	8%			**90%**
Treating people of all racial, ethnic, religious, and income groups with respect	59%	28%	9%			**86%**
Easy access to affordable physical healthcare	48%	37%	10%			**85%**
Affordable, healthy food options	46%	36%	13%			**82%**
Having a large number of available jobs	40%	42%	12%	5%		**82%**

Q14. Split Sample

Influencing their local community, affordable homes, affordable mental health and a safety net are also highly important.

	Ext. Impt.	Very Impt.	Smwt. Impt.	Not Too Impt.	Don't Know	Ext./Very Impt.
The ability of local residents to influence the leadership and direction of the community	40%	39%	16%			79%
A wide range of affordable homes	44%	33%	17%			78%
Easy access to affordable mental healthcare	44%	33%	16%	5%		77%
A strong social safety net for people who need assistance	40%	34%	19%	7%		73%
Convenient transportation options that help people get to and from work	34%	32%	21%	11%		66%
A feeling of togetherness and belonging	29%	37%	27%	5%		66%

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Q14. Here is a list of factors that may contribute to making a community healthy. Please indicate whether you consider it to be extremely, very, somewhat, or not too important to making a community healthy. Split Sample

Respondents rank the factors in a similar order regardless of their race and ethnicity.

Factor	Extremely/Very Important			
	All Residents	Race/Ethnicity		
		Whites	African Americans	All BIPOC
Having good jobs, with benefits, opportunities for growth, and meaningful work	**90%**	89%	98%	95%
Low levels of crime and violence	**90%**	91%	90%	88%
Treating people of all racial, ethnic, religious, and income groups with respect	**86%**	87%	88%	86%
Easy access to affordable physical healthcare	**85%**	86%	85%	82%
Affordable, healthy food options	**82%**	82%	86%	82%
Having a large number of available jobs	**82%**	80%	89%	85%
The ability of local residents to influence the leadership and direction of the community	**79%**	79%	80%	79%
A wide range of affordable homes	**78%**	77%	84%	80%
Easy access to affordable mental healthcare	**77%**	76%	86%	83%
A strong social safety net for people who need assistance	**73%**	72%	88%	80%
Convenient transportation options that help people get to and from work	**66%**	65%	78%	69%
A feeling of togetherness and belonging	**66%**	65%	72%	69%

Q14. Here is a list of factors that may contribute to making a community healthy. Please indicate whether you consider it to be extremely, very, somewhat, or not too important to making a community healthy. Split Sample

Democrats assign more importance to many of the factors than independents and Republicans do.

Factor	All Residents	Extremely/Very Important Party		
		Dems.	Inds.	Reps.
Having good jobs, with benefits, opportunities for growth, and meaningful work	**90%**	94%	88%	89%
Low levels of crime and violence	**90%**	92%	86%	91%
Treating people of all racial, ethnic, religious, and income groups with respect	**86%**	94%	84%	82%
Easy access to affordable physical healthcare	**85%**	90%	80%	83%
Affordable, healthy food options	**82%**	89%	86%	73%
Having a large number of available jobs	**82%**	83%	81%	81%
The ability of local residents to influence the leadership and direction of the community	**79%**	82%	77%	77%
A wide range of affordable homes	**78%**	86%	81%	69%
Easy access to affordable mental healthcare	**77%**	90%	76%	67%
A strong social safety net for people who need assistance	**73%**	90%	72%	60%
Convenient transportation options that help people get to and from work	**66%**	79%	69%	52%
A feeling of togetherness and belonging	**66%**	64%	72%	63%

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Participants in the qualitative sessions ranked the factors in a similar order.

Factor	Number of Participants Who Chose "Extremely Important"	
	QualBoards	Focus Groups
Treating people of all racial, ethnic, religious, and income groups with respect	21	59
Low levels of crime and violence	18	49
Having good jobs with benefits, opportunities for growth, and meaningful work	16	49
Easy access to affordable physical healthcare	15	45
Easy access to affordable mental healthcare	15	40
The ability of local residents to influence the leadership and direction of the community	14	29
Convenient transportation options that help people get to and from work	14	27
A strong social safety net for people who need assistance	13	39
A wide range of affordable homes	11	29
Affordable, healthy food options	11	35
A feeling of togetherness and belonging	11	27
Having a large number of available jobs	10	25

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Next, here is a list of factors that may or may not make a community healthy. For each one please indicate whether you consider it to be extremely, very, somewhat, or not important to making a community healthy. Then write a few words explaining your choices.

Participants in the qualitative sessions agreed that a wide range of community factors influence its health.

QualBoard Female: Community involvement- whether you're part of a club, church, organization, or just attend city council meetings, it all helps to create stronger community ties and involvement, and therefore leads to a stronger community. Online communities don't count.

QualBoard Male: A healthy community consists of many different things: good-paying jobs, affordable housing and education. And neighbors that look out for each other and help each other, not only in times of disaster.

St. Louis Female: Low levels of crime and violence. Violence is just out of hand. It's crazy. People have just, excuse me, but they've done lost their minds. I'll say it again. It's sad. Everybody is on the edge, ready to jump off, so to speak.

Springfield Male: Your opinion and your voice and your values are similar to the other people in the community in that your voice is heard.

Views on the Economy and Financial Wellbeing

Respondents were modestly positive about the economy in their part of the state.

How would you rate the strength of the <u>economy in your part of Missouri</u> on a scale of 1 to 10, where a 1 means very weak and a 10 means very strong.

Rating	Percentage
10 (Very strong)	3%
9	3%
8	14%
7	18%
6	15%
5	16%
4	10%
3	7%
2	5%
1 (Very weak)	7%
Don't know/Refused	2%
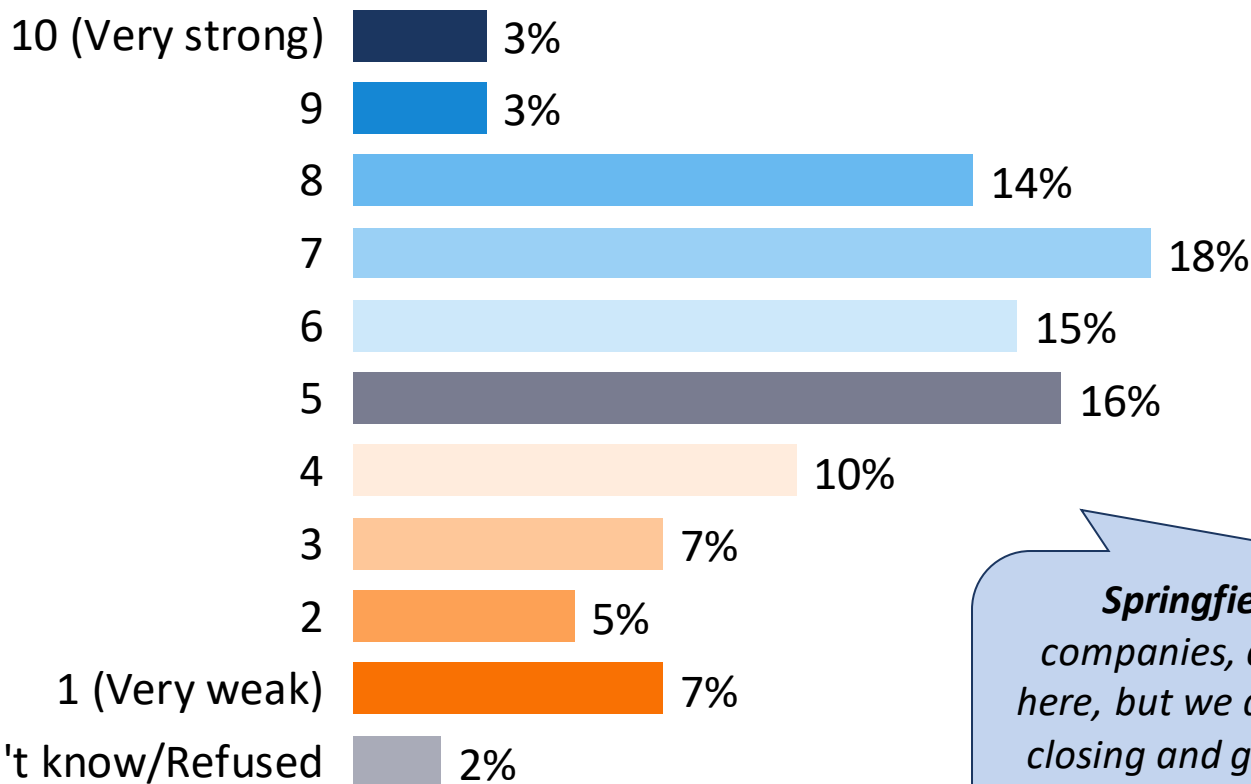
Mean Score 5.5

Springfield Male: We have good companies, and we have big companies here, but we also have companies that are closing and going out of business and are letting people go. There's lots of work, just not enough people to go around for it.

Q15.

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NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Two-thirds say not having sufficient *good* jobs is a bigger challenge than not having enough of them.

Economically, which is a bigger challenge in your community right now:
not having enough jobs for people who want one OR not having enough <u>good</u> jobs?

Not having enough good jobs — 66%

Not having enough jobs for people who want one — 18%

Don't know — 16%
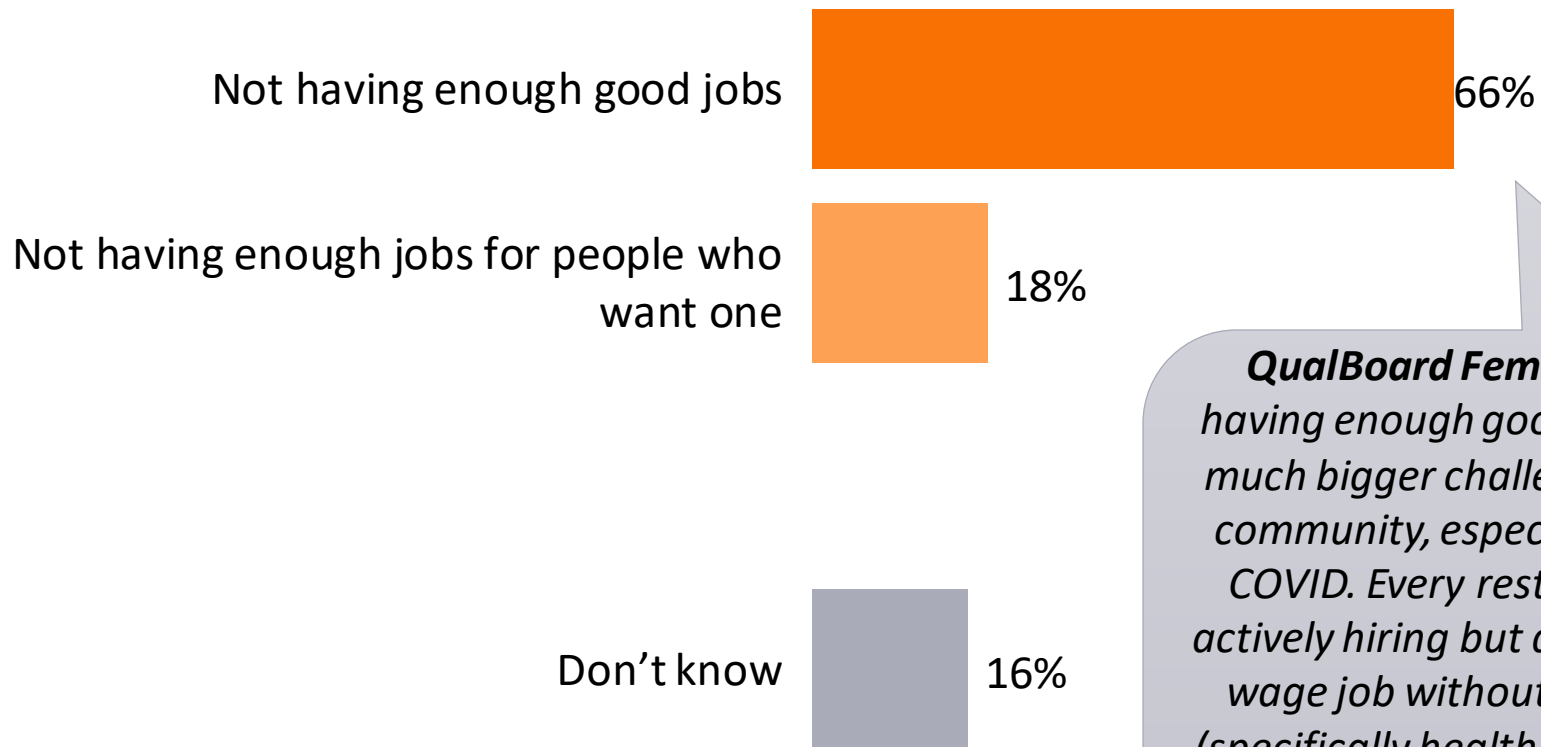
> ***QualBoard Female:*** *Not having enough good jobs is a much bigger challenge in my community, especially since COVID. Every restaurant is actively hiring but a minimum wage job without benefits (specifically health insurance) is not likely to be able to support a family.*

Missourians offer more positive evaluations of their own personal financial situations than of the state.

How would you rate the financial security of <u>your own household</u> on a scale of 1 to 10, where a 1 means very weak and a 10 means very strong?

Rating	Percentage
10 (Very strong)	13%
9	8%
8	19%
7	16%
6	10%
5	12%
4	6%
3	7%
2	3%
1 (Very weak)	5%
Don't know/Refused	2%

Mean Score 6.5

QualBoard Female: Although I feel pretty secure most of the time, I feel that inflation has had a direct impact on everything we have. It's gotten more expensive to live. Groceries especially have gotten so expensive.

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Q17.
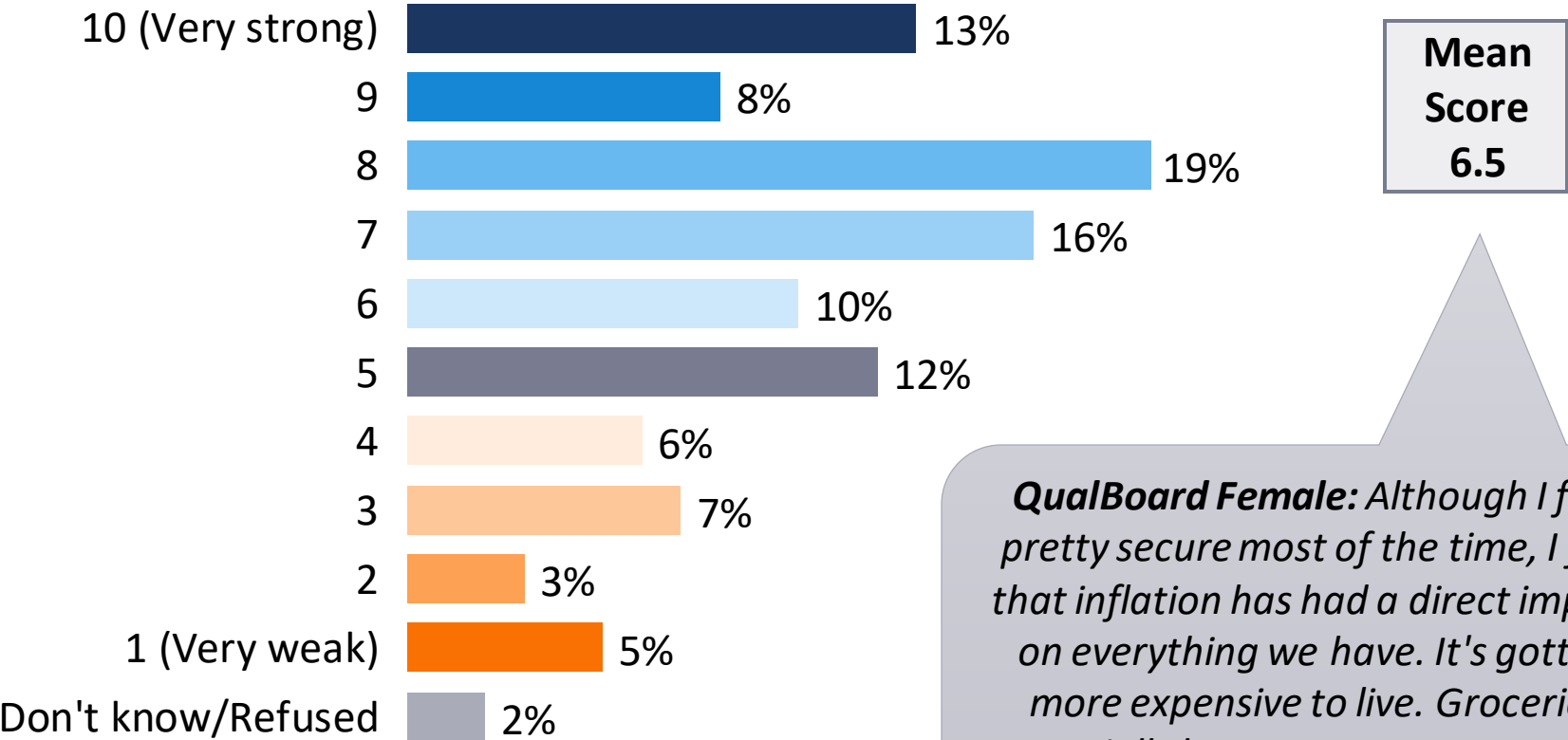
Most Missourians say they are living comfortably, but only one-quarter are able to save.

More generally, which of the following best describes your financial situation:

Living comfortably with increasing savings	25%
Living comfortably but not increasing savings	34%
Just getting by financially	28%
Really struggling financially	10%
Don't know	3%

Q18.
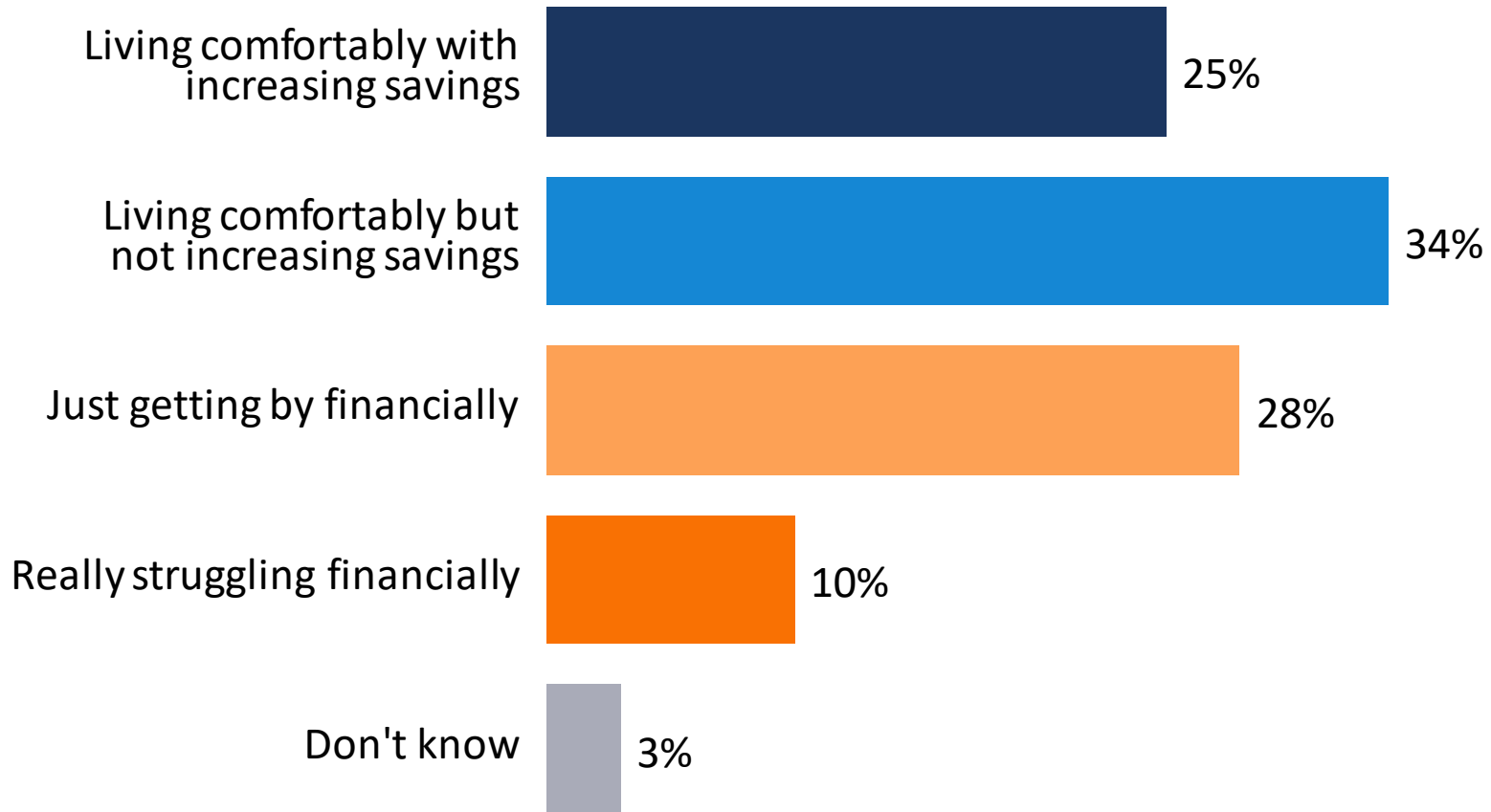
BIPOC respondents are more likely to say they are "just getting by" than are white Missourians.

Response	All Residents	Race/Ethnicity			Household Income	
		Whites	African Americans	All BIPOC	<$50,000	$50,000+
Living comfortably with increasing savings	**25%**	25%	21%	23%	8%	36%
Living comfortably but not increasing savings	**34%**	36%	28%	26%	25%	42%
Just getting by financially	**28%**	26%	31%	35%	44%	18%
Really struggling financially	**10%**	9%	15%	13%	21%	4%
Don't know	**3%**	3%	4%	3%	1%	1%

Q18. More generally, which of the following best describes your financial situation:

FM3 RESEARCH
NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Those living with a disability are more likely to be just getting by financially or struggling.

Response	All Residents	Gender		Living With a Disability		LGBTQ+	
		Men	**Women**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Living comfortably with increasing savings	**25%**	29%	20%	14%	29%	22%	25%
Living comfortably but not increasing savings	**34%**	34%	35%	28%	37%	32%	35%
Just getting by financially	**28%**	27%	30%	38%	25%	30%	28%
Really struggling financially	**10%**	7%	13%	20%	7%	15%	10%
Don't know	**3%**	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%

Q18. More generally, which of the following best describes your financial situation:

FM3 RESEARCH   NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Participants in the qualitative sessions viewed costs and the affordability of basic expenses as the main indicators of the strength of the economy.

- Across the focus groups and the QualBoard, participants said the cost of basics and the amount of money people can afford to save after expenses were the most important metrics of the strength of the economy.
- Macroeconomic indicators, like unemployment rates and the stock market were less frequently seen as reliable measures of economic strength.

QualBoard Female: The ability to afford basic expenses, because as a mom of five kids it's too expensive to work and it's too expensive to stay home. The cost of groceries, gas etc. because everything is getting more expensive and pay isn't increasing. We have to work two jobs to keep up and still have to afford gas to go grocery shopping and soccer and school events.

St. Louis African American: Prices are going up - food and utilities, and it makes it hard for people. Jobs, they aren't paying enough. Everything else is going up and you are not really making enough money is how I look at it.

One-third of Missourians say they are worse off than they were a year ago.

Would you say you are better off, or worse off financially than you were a year ago, or is your financial situation about the same?

Much better	9%	**Total Better 24%**
Somewhat better	15%	
About the same	42%	
Somewhat worse	18%	**Total Worse 32%**
Much worse	14%	
Don't know	1%	
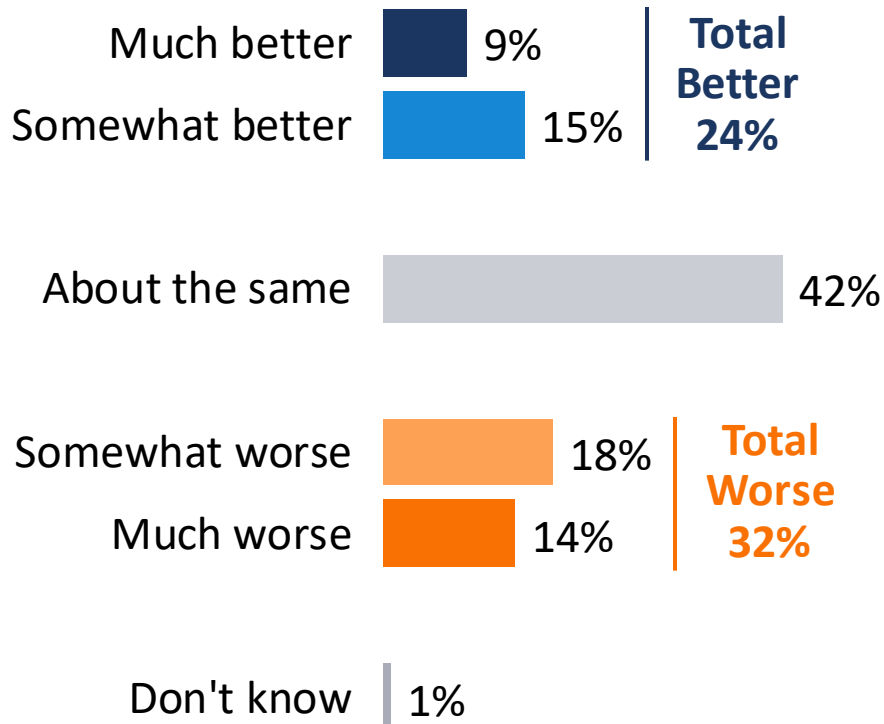
Demographic Groups Most Likely to Say They are Worse Off

Republicans

Unemployed

Clay County

Ages 40-49

Have Teen Children

Not Registered to Vote

Household Size 4+

Uninsured

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Nearly one in ten have faced eviction or the loss of housing in the past year.

Over the past year, have you faced eviction or loss of housing because you could not afford your monthly rent or mortgage?

Yes 7%

Don't Know 1%

No 92%
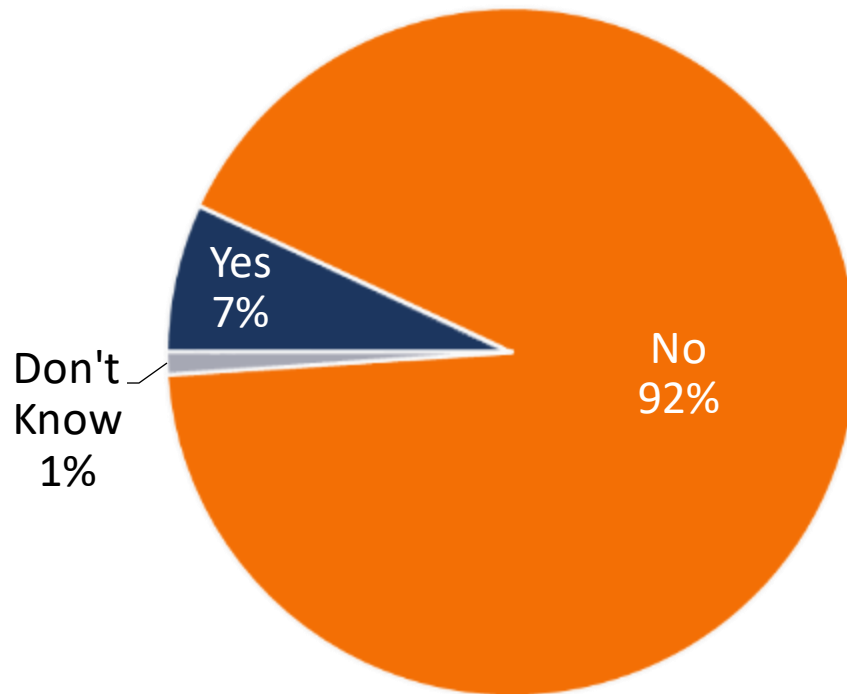
Renters, independents who are female or under 50, those living in the City of St. Louis and African-Americans were most likely to have had these experiences.

One-quarter have been unable to afford food at some point in the past year.

Over the past year, have you at any time been unable to afford enough food to meet the nutrition and dietary needs of you or your family?

Yes, frequently — 8%

Yes, occasionally — 11%   **Total Yes 24%**

Yes, rarely — 5%

No — 75%

Don't know — 1%
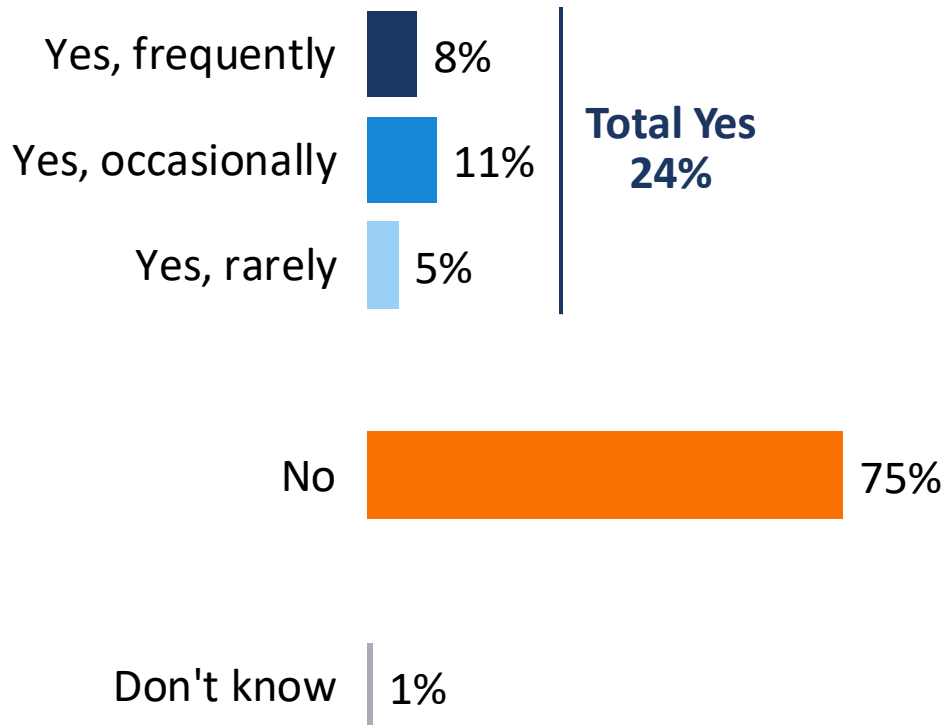
Demographic Groups Most Likely to Have Been Unable to Afford Food

- Unemployed
- HH Income Under $50,000
- Uninsured
- Renters
- Independent Women
- Live with a Disability
- Independents Ages 18-49
- Live with Friend/Family
- Women Ages 18-49
- Paducah Media Market
- Non-College Educated Women
- Single-Person Household
- LGBTQ+

Q22.

FM3 RESEARCH
NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Nearly one in five have experienced involuntary unemployment in the past year.

Over the past year, have you experienced unemployment at a time when you wanted to be employed?

Yes
17%

No
81%

Don't Know
2%
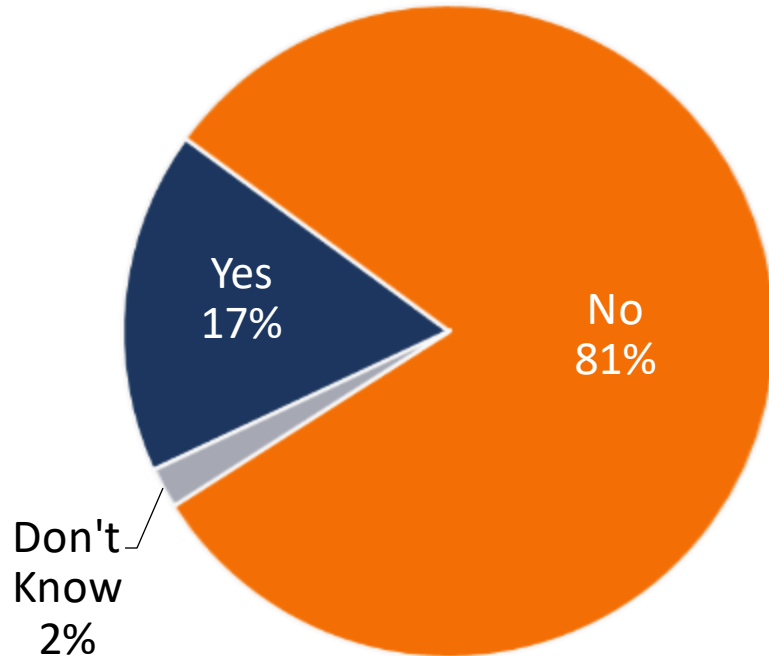
Demographic Groups Most Likely to Be Unemployed
Unemployed
Live with Friend/Family
Interviewed in Spanish
St. Louis City
HH Income Under $30,000
Household Size 4+
Uninsured
Independents Ages 18-49
Independent Women
HH Income <$50,000
Renters
Under Age 30
Live with a Disability
Independents
Not Registered to Vote
LGBTQ+

Q23.

Participants in qualitative research widely agreed that a strong local economy benefits both a community's health and their personal health.

- Participants saw a clear connection between a strong local economy, good jobs, access to healthcare and the ability to afford food and housing.
- They also noted that financial instability and living in unsafe neighborhoods could lead to physical and mental stress.

Springfield Male: Your financial security is probably one of the number one drivers of mental health issues. You are financially secure, [you have] so much less stress, so much less frustration.

QualBoard Male: A strong local economy begets many job opportunities, full employment, and a generally optimistic populace. Optimism is essential to mental health. Mental health, in turn, boosts physical health.

Hannibal Male: If you're living paycheck-to-paycheck, and you pay the rent, pay the lights and gas, and you put fuel in the car, and now you're just trying to get to Friday and you've got $30 in your account, you're not going to be able to go to Whole Foods and...plan on grilled chicken the rest of the week. You're going to be going to the generic aisle and getting the generic Reese's Peanut Butter Cup cereal for $2 a box now.

Experiences with Health and Healthcare

One in five have been without health insurance at some point in the last year.

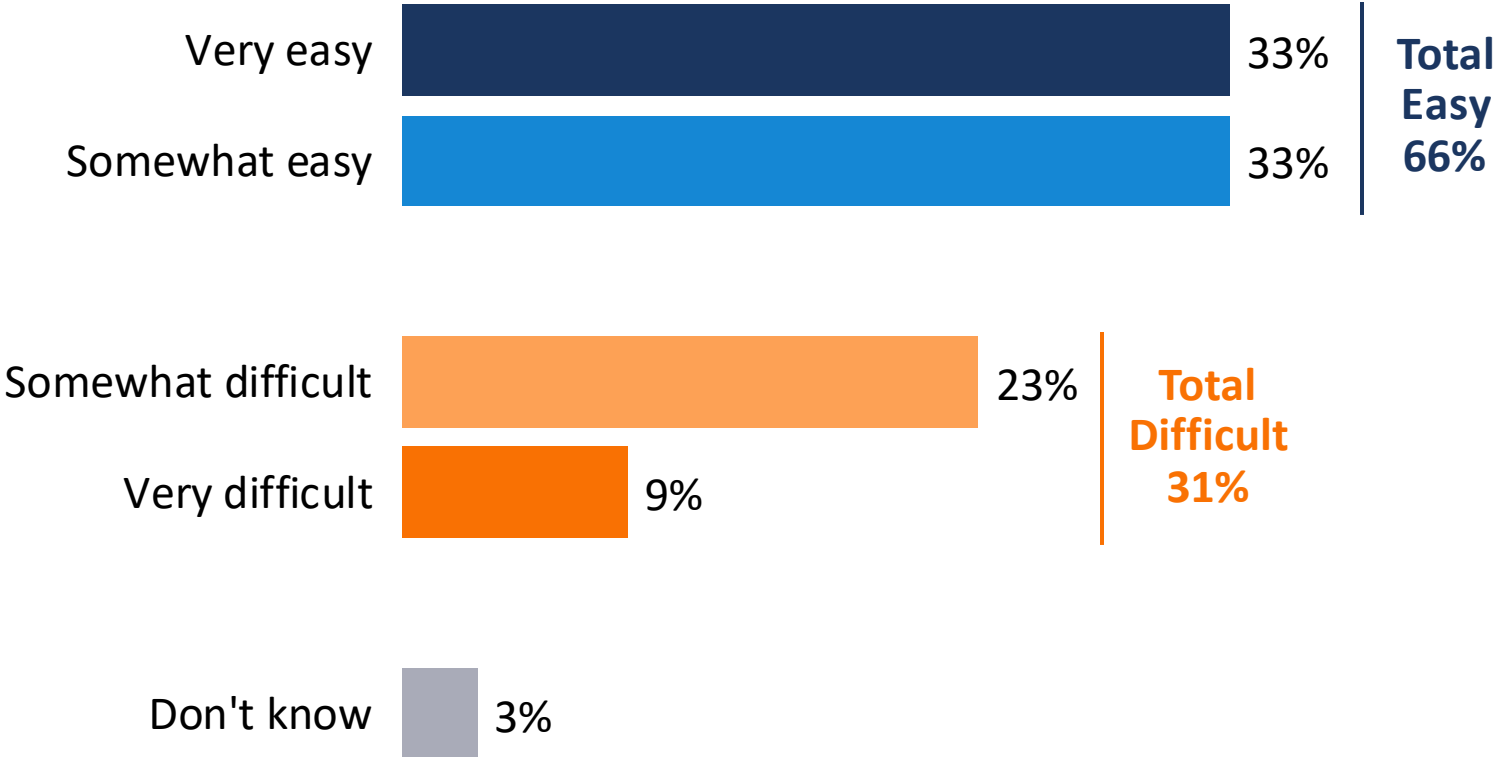*Over the past year, have you or someone in your household been without health insurance coverage?*

Yes, self — 8%

Yes, someone in household — 7%

Both — 5%

Total Yes 20%

No — 78%

Don't know — 1%
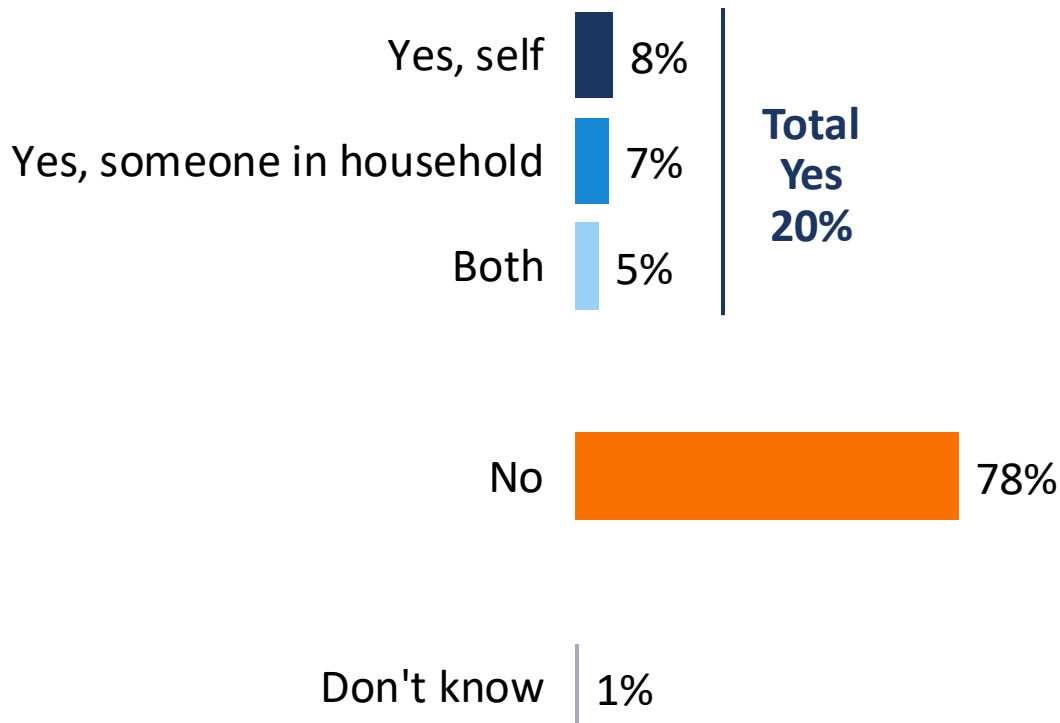
Demographic Groups Most Likely to Have Been without Insurance Coverage
Currently Uninsured
Interviewed in Spanish
LGBTQ+
Under Age 30
Lived 11-20 Years In Missouri
Independents Ages 18-49
Household Size 4+
Renters
Not Registered to Vote
HH Income Under $30,000
Live with Friend/Family

Q21.

Two-thirds say it is easy to find care for <u>physical</u> health in their community.

Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's <u>physical</u> health in your community?
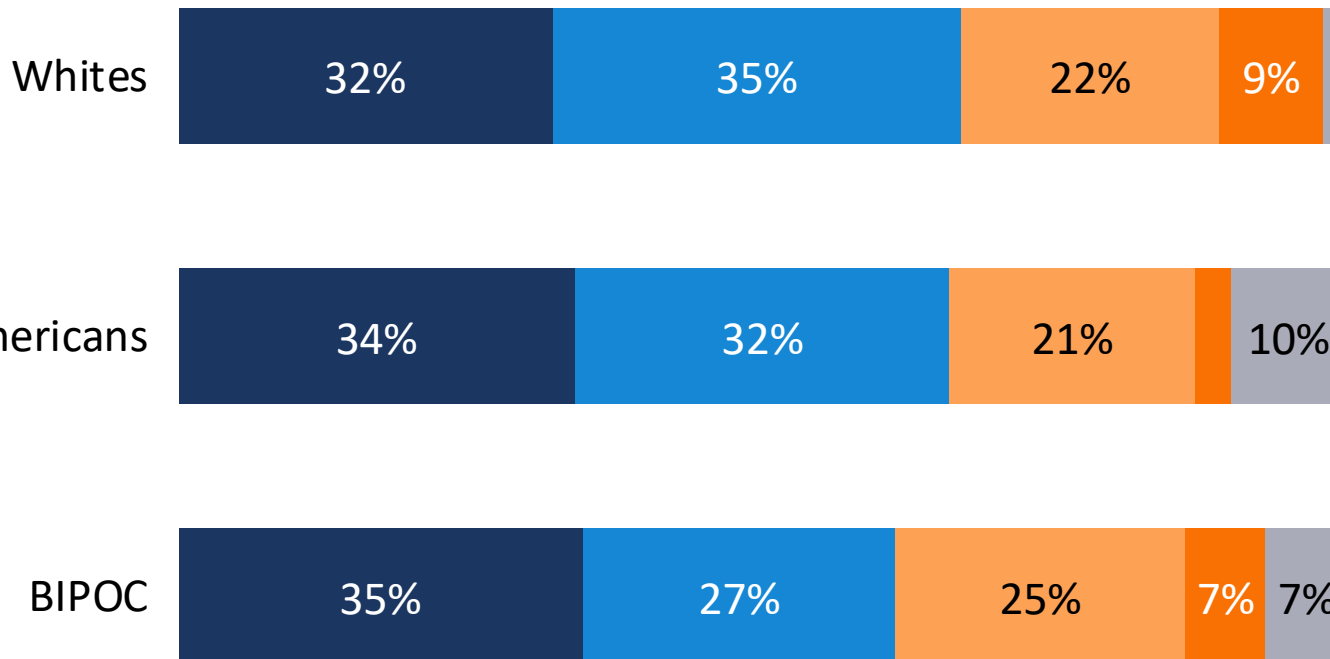
Category	Value
Very easy	33%
Somewhat easy	33%

Total Easy 66%

Category	Value
Somewhat difficult	23%
Very difficult	9%

Total Difficult 31%

Category	Value
Don't know	3%

Perceptions of the ease of accessing physical healthcare cut across lines of race and ethnicity.
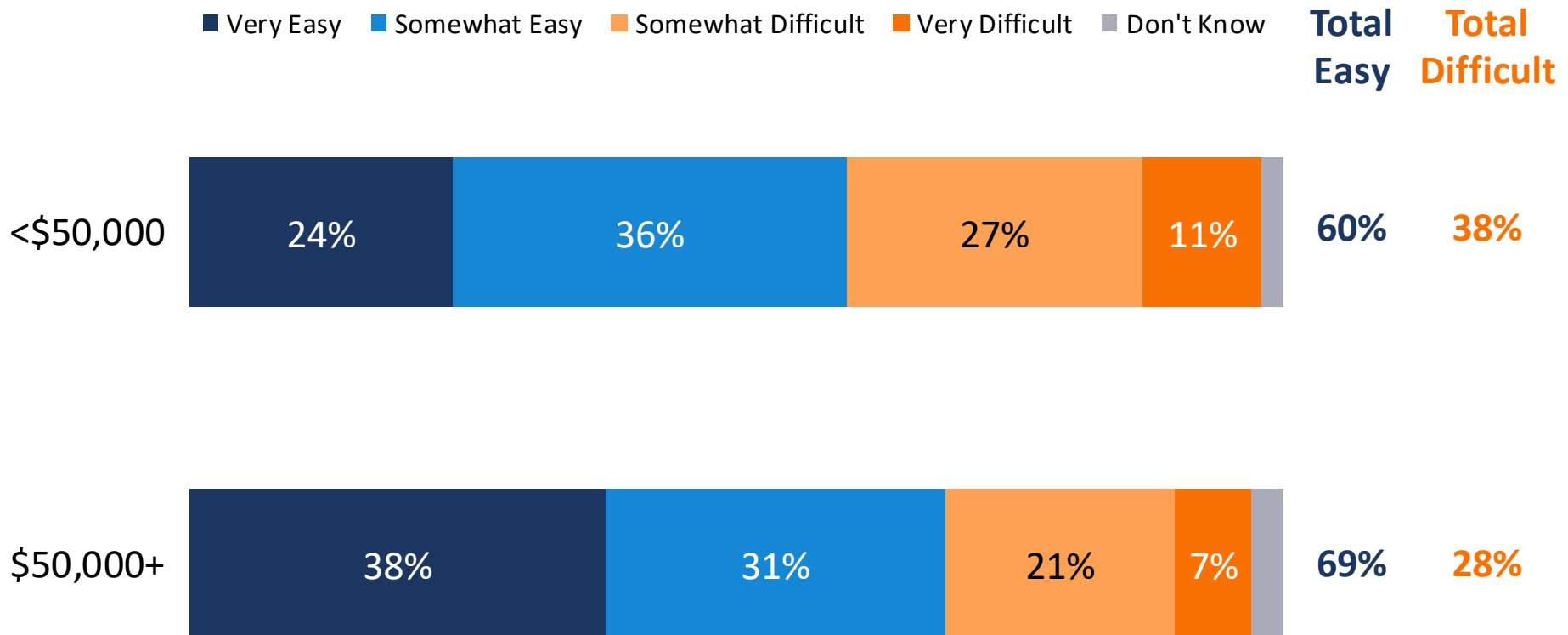
by Race/Ethnicity

■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

		Total Easy	**Total Difficult**
Whites	32% · 35% · 22% · 9%	**67%**	**31%**
African Americans	34% · 32% · 21% · 10%	**66%**	**24%**
BIPOC	35% · 27% · 25% · 7% · 7%	**62%**	**31%**

Those with higher incomes are more likely to say it is easy to get physical healthcare.

by Household Income

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
<$50,000	24%	36%	27%	11%		**60%**	**38%**
$50,000+	38%	31%	21%	7%		**69%**	**28%**

Those with higher levels of educational attainment are also slightly more likely to say it is easy to get physical healthcare.

by Education

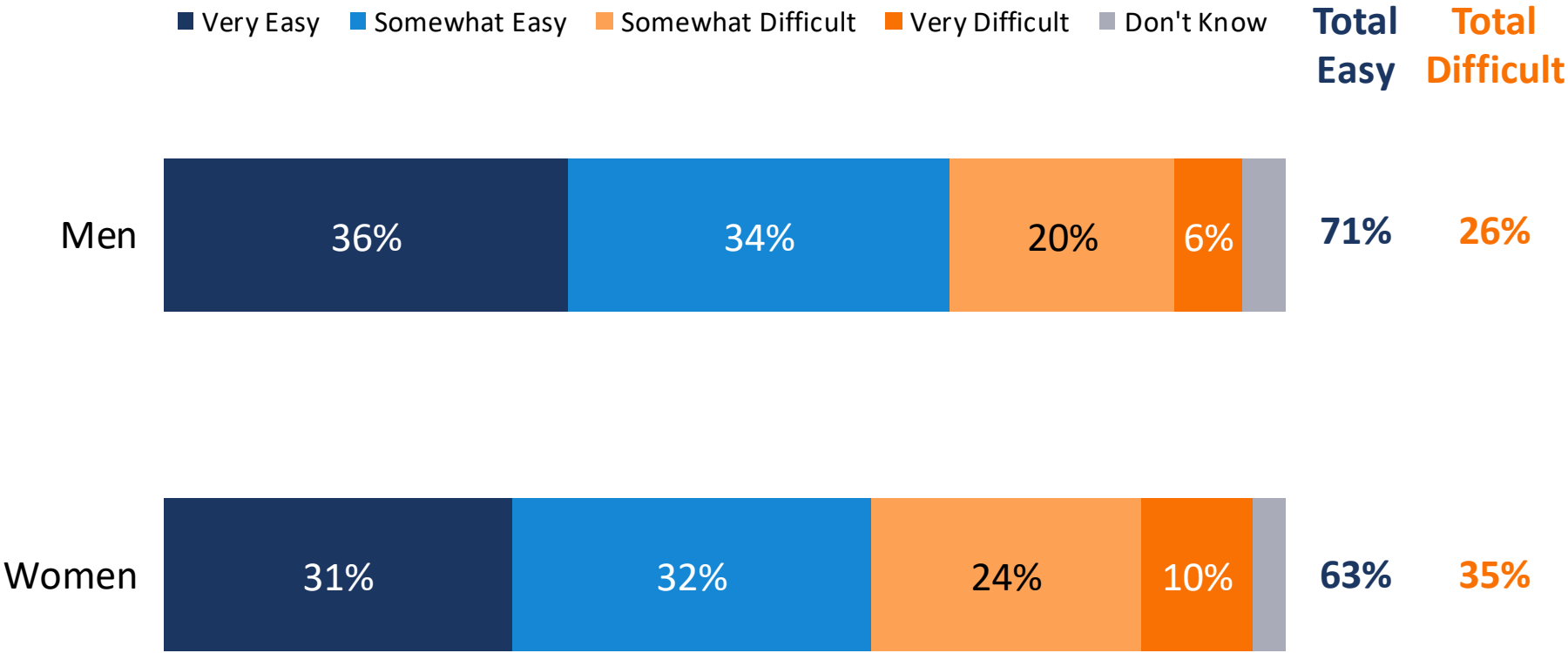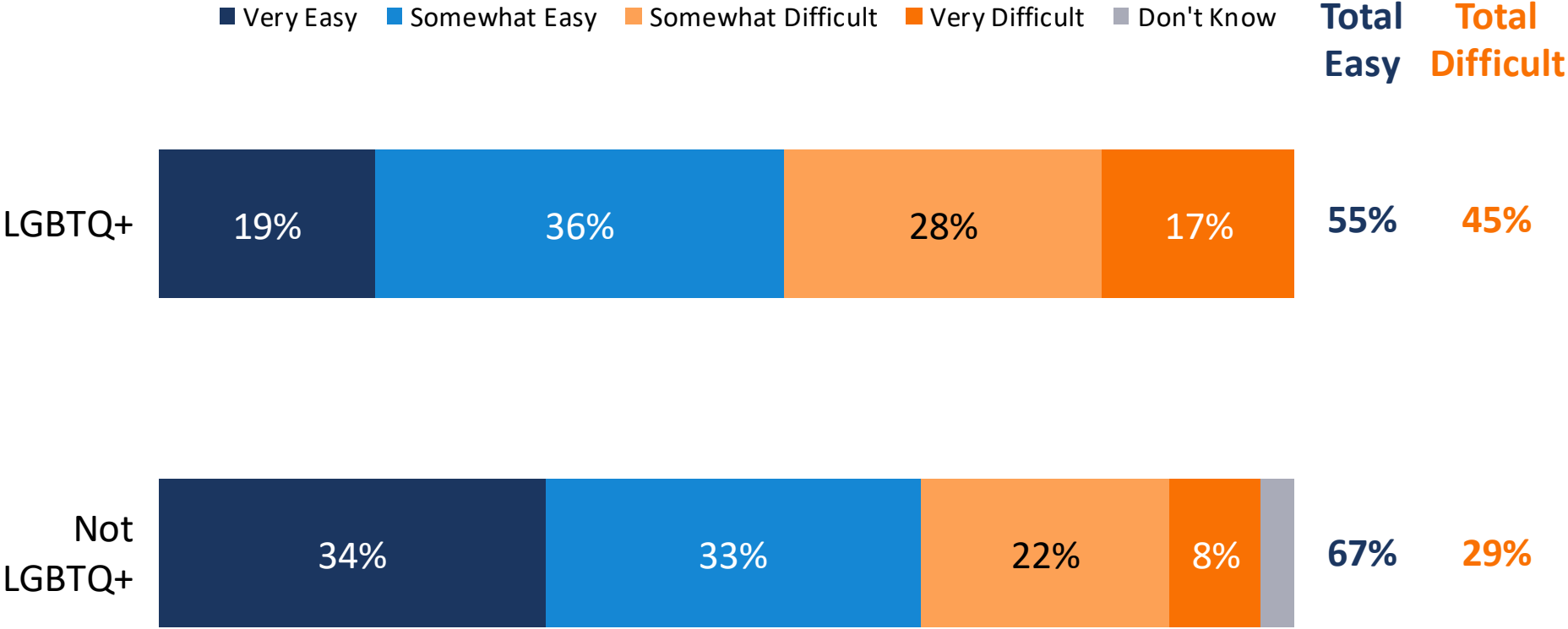Legend: ■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Some College or Less	32%	32%	23%	10%	64%	33%
Four-year College or More	35%	35%	21%	6%	70%	27%

FM3 RESEARCH
NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY
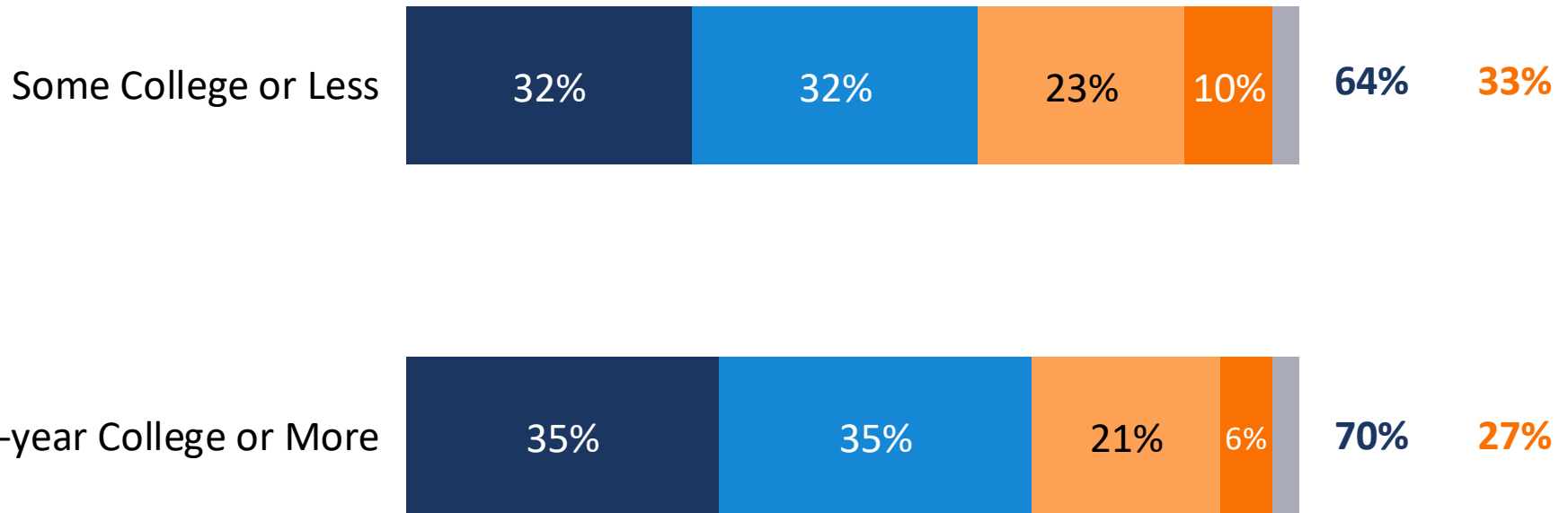
Men are more likely than women to say it is easy to get physical healthcare.

by Gender

Legend: ■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Men	36%	34%	20%	6%	71%	26%
Women	31%	32%	24%	10%	63%	35%

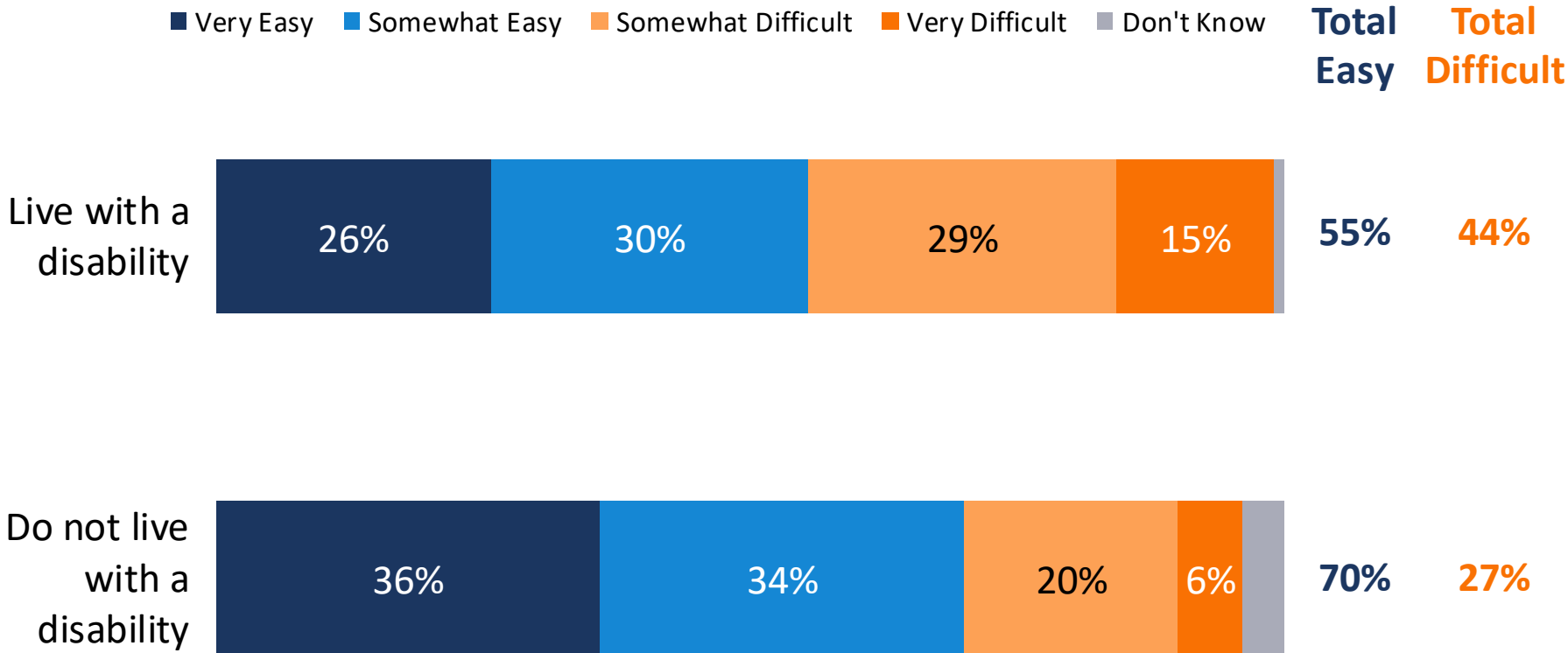*Q24. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's physical health in your community?*

LGBTQ+ Missourians are more likely to say it is difficult to get care than are non-LGBTQ+ residents.

by LGBTQ+

■ Very Easy   ■ Somewhat Easy   ■ Somewhat Difficult   ■ Very Difficult   ■ Don't Know

					Total Easy	**Total Difficult**
LGBTQ+	19%	36%	28%	17%	**55%**	**45%**
Not LGBTQ+	34%	33%	22%	8%	**67%**	**29%**

Q24. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's physical health in your community?

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Those who live with a disability are more likely to say it is difficult to get care than those who do not.

by Live With a Disability

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Live with a disability	26%	30%	29%	15%		**55%**	**44%**
Do not live with a disability	36%	34%	20%	6%		**70%**	**27%**

FM3 RESEARCH
NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

QualBoard participants felt that accessing medical care in rural areas was more challenging.

QualBoard Woman: *Small towns are limited to certain providers or not any providers. You have to travel 30-plus minutes to find some, and some people can't afford that or don't have a way to get to the doctor. Mental health is worse because the nearest psychologist is 45 minutes away.*

QualBoard Woman: *There are very little doctors in my area and there are none in my town that take my children's Medicaid, so I have to leave my community to get my kids' health taken care of.*

QualBoard Man: *It was easy, but now that my insurance coverage has changed, it's going to be less convenient. My primary-care provider is located in another town, and I don't have a license or a vehicle to drive.*

QualBoard Woman: *While it IS easy, it's also very expensive. We have plenty of doctors offices and urgent care clinics, but good luck getting into see a doctor at one of these locations and if you do get an appt, you will for sure have to pay for it financially!*

Costs pose the biggest challenge to accessing care, according to focus group participants.

- Participants in all eight focus groups ranked costs as the biggest challenges to getting care.
- BIPOC participants in Cape Girardeau were more likely than others to say that providers' lack of understanding of patients' language or culture was a barrier.

Challenge	Number of Focus Group Participants		
	Major Challenge	Minor Challenge	Not a Challenge
High cost of care	61	7	1
High cost of insurance premiums	55	12	2
High deductibles/copays	51	15	4
Lack of available appointments when you need them	26	30	13
Don't feel comfortable getting care for certain health issues	21	19	29
Lack of medical providers in your community	15	22	32
Transportation to appointments	13	29	26
Too busy and can't get away to go to the doctor	13	27	28
Poor quality medical providers or care	9	33.5	27.5
Lack of convenient locations or hours	9	25	35
Medical providers don't understand the language or culture of local residents	8	21	41

FM3 RESEARCH
NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

Verbatim Comments on Healthcare Costs from Qualitative Research

QualBoard Female: *My husband and I have decent health insurance through his employer, which I am grateful for. However, the medical bills can still be high. We have savings but if a medical expense comes up, it's always painful to pay that expensive bill. We want to start a family eventually and I know we will have to save money just to pay for the hospital bills.*

QualBoard Female: *The biggest concern I have is the possibility of losing my health care. I wouldn't be able to afford to stay alive.*

St. Louis Male: *The medication I take, without insurance, would cost $1,600. How is that even possible?*

Springfield Male: *I'm on Medicare now. I got on it six months ago. I have not had anything major, but I was on private insurance, so my employer. I retired back in June. So I'm changing over and am just finding out the nuances about how it all works, but so far it's been good. One thing is covered and the next thing costs me an arm and a leg.*

Half of Missourians have experienced mental health strain in the last year.

In the last year, have you experienced mental health strain such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, or stress that affected your daily life?
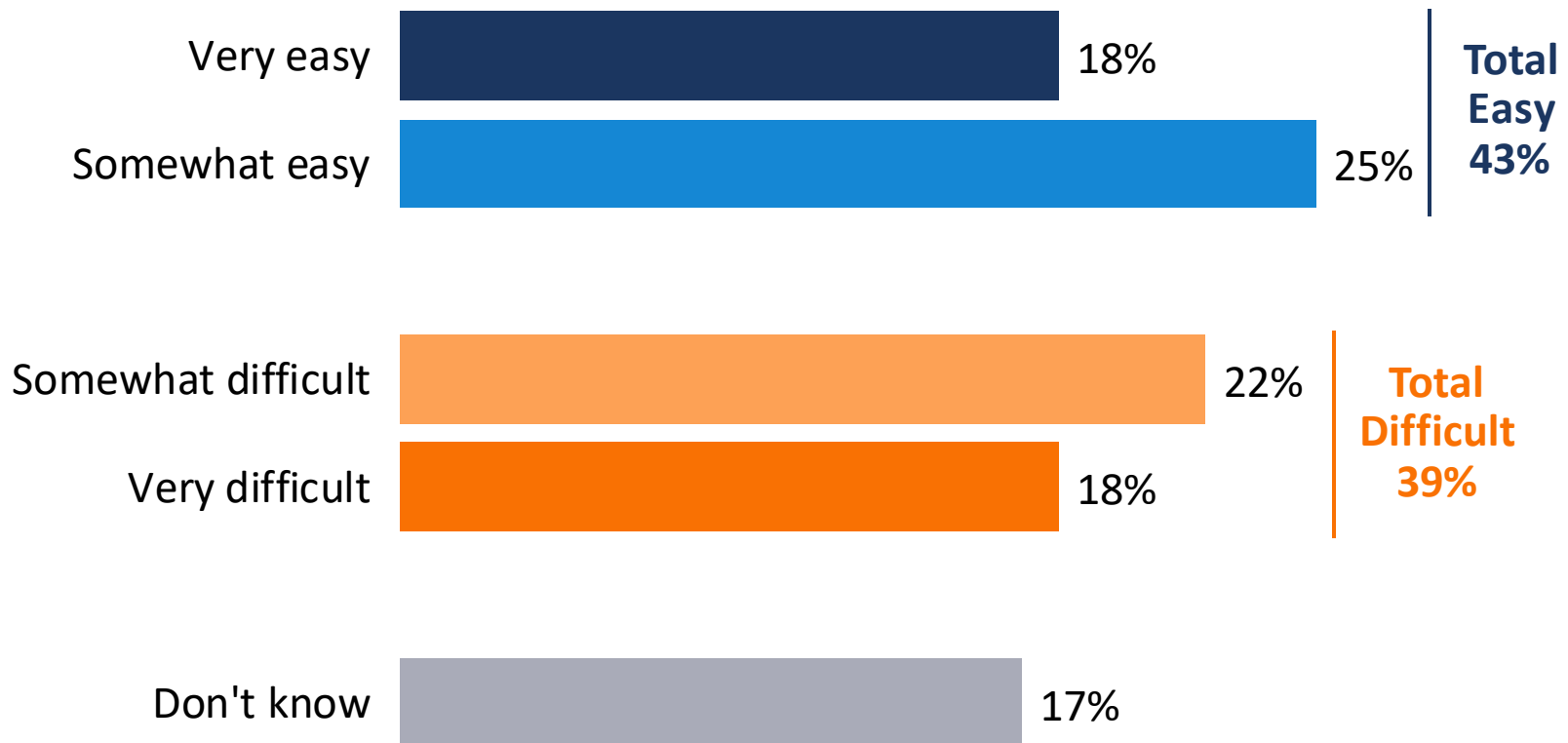
Yes
53%

No
46%

Don't Know
1%
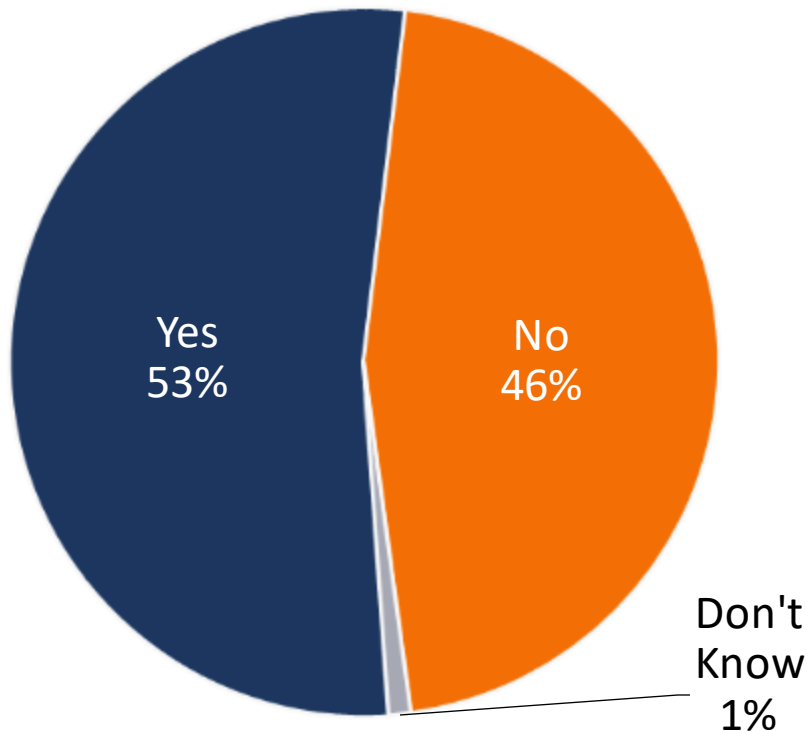
Those most likely to report experiencing mental health strain include:

- LGBTQ+ Missourians
- Democrats under 50
- Unemployed
- Women under 50
- Those living with disabilities
- Missourians under 30

Q26.

Respondents are divided in their views on how easy it is to get <u>mental</u> healthcare.

Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's <u>mental</u> health in your community?

Very easy	18%
Somewhat easy	25%

Total Easy 43%

Somewhat difficult	22%
Very difficult	18%

Total Difficult 39%

Don't know	17%

Q25.

Perceptions of the ease of access to mental healthcare cut across racial and ethnic lines.

by Race/Ethnicity

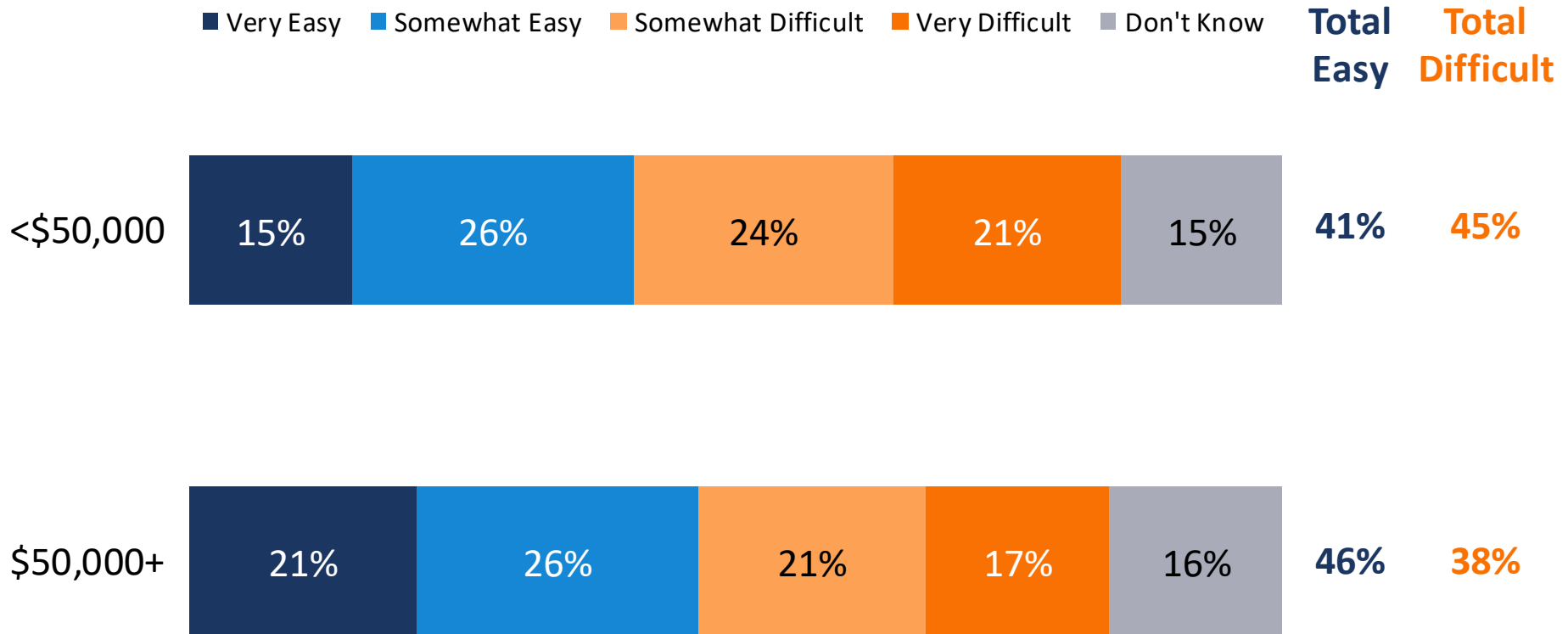|	■ Very Easy	■ Somewhat Easy	■ Somewhat Difficult	■ Very Difficult	■ Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Whites	19%	25%	22%	18%	16%	**43%**	**40%**
African Americans	18%	27%	19%	17%	19%	**45%**	**36%**
BIPOC	18%	27%	19%	18%	18%	**45%**	**37%**

Q25. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's mental health in your community?
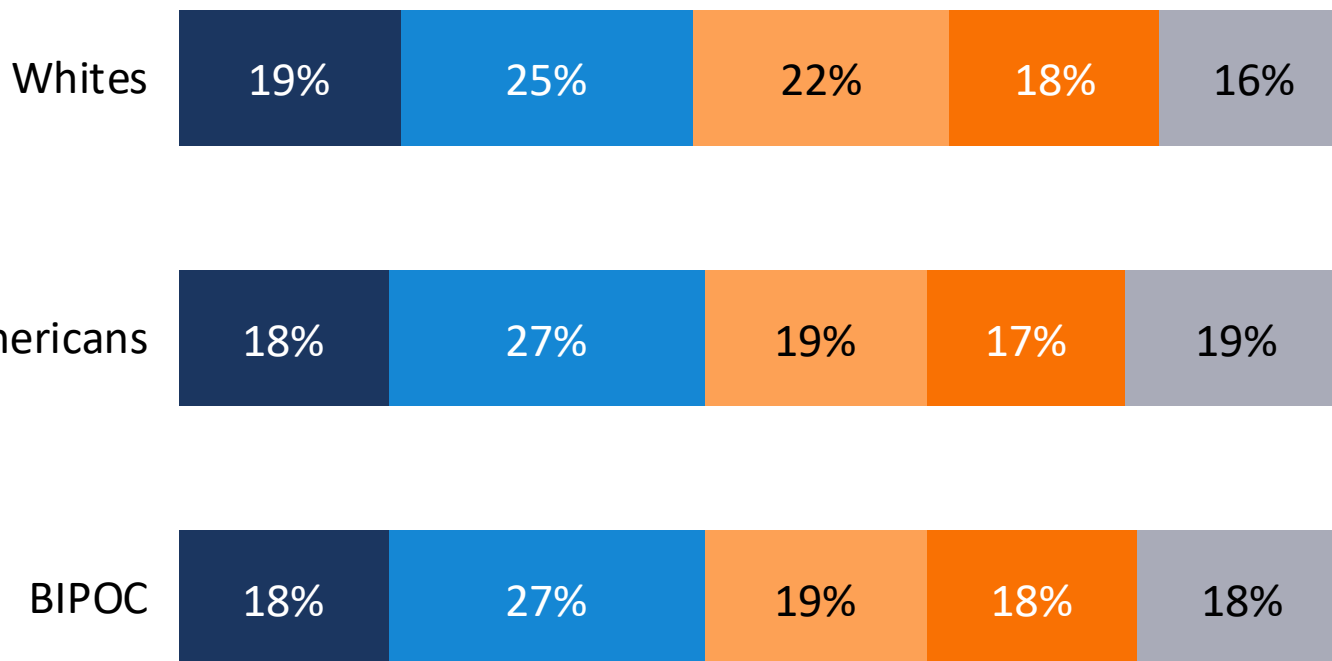
Higher-income respondents are only modestly more likely to say it is easy than those with lower incomes.

by Household Income

Legend: ■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
<$50,000	15%	26%	24%	21%	15%	**41%**	**45%**
$50,000+	21%	26%	21%	17%	16%	**46%**	**38%**

Q25. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's <u>mental</u> health in your community?
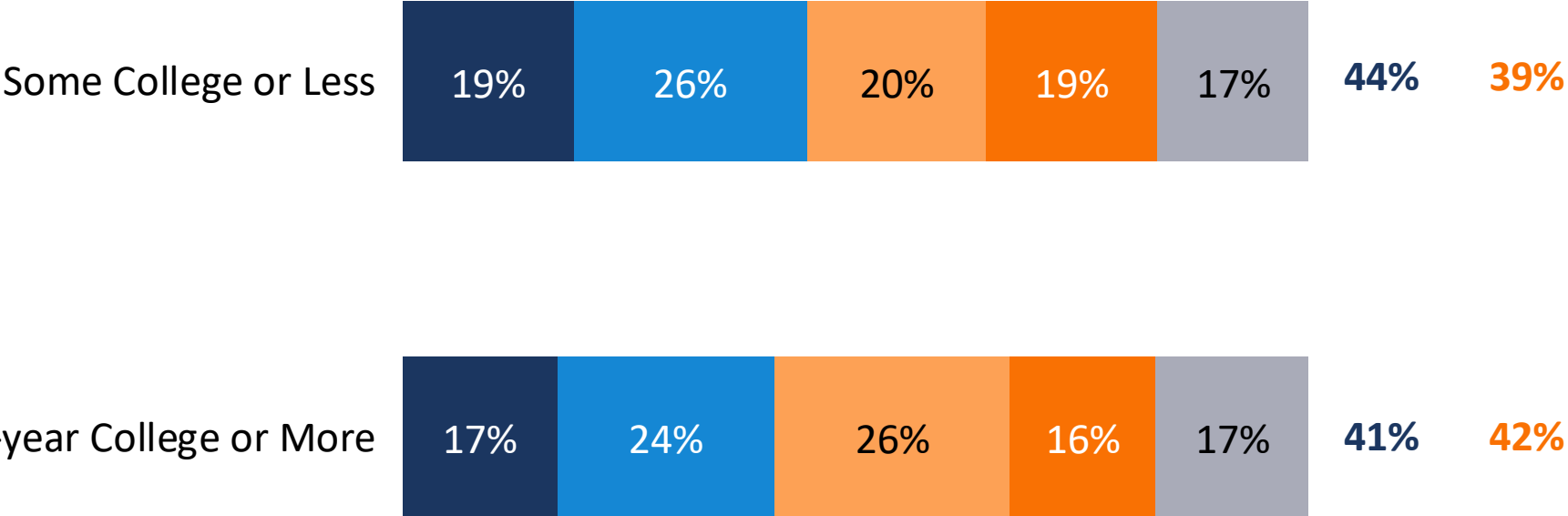
There is little difference in ease of access to mental healthcare by education level.

by Education

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	**Total Easy**	**Total Difficult**
Some College or Less	19%	26%	20%	19%	17%	**44%**	**39%**
Four-year College or More	17%	24%	26%	16%	17%	**41%**	**42%**

Q25. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's mental health in your community?

Men are much more likely to say it is easy to get mental healthcare than are women.

by Gender

■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Men	22%	29%	17%	14%	18%	51%	32%
Women	16%	22%	26%	20%	16%	38%	46%

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY
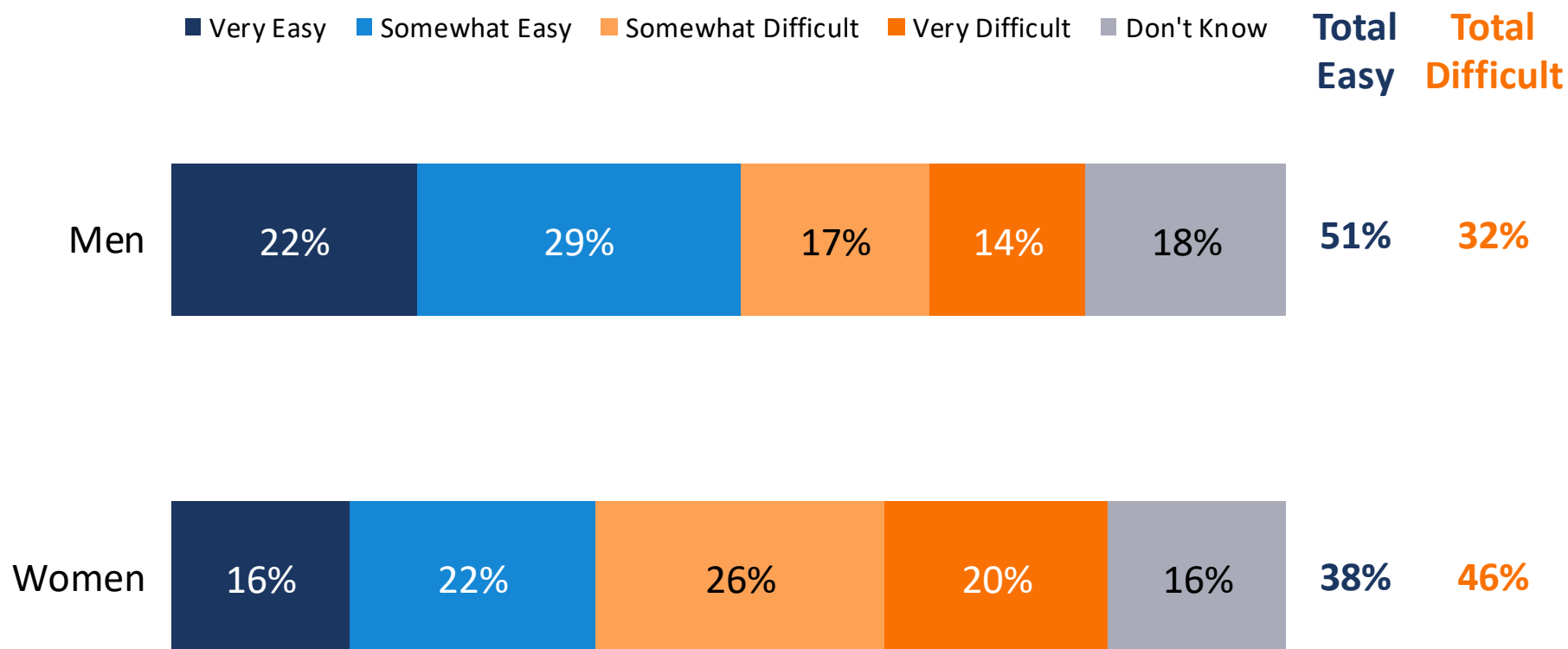
LGBTQ+ respondents are nearly twice as likely to say it is difficult to find mental healthcare.

by LGBTQ+

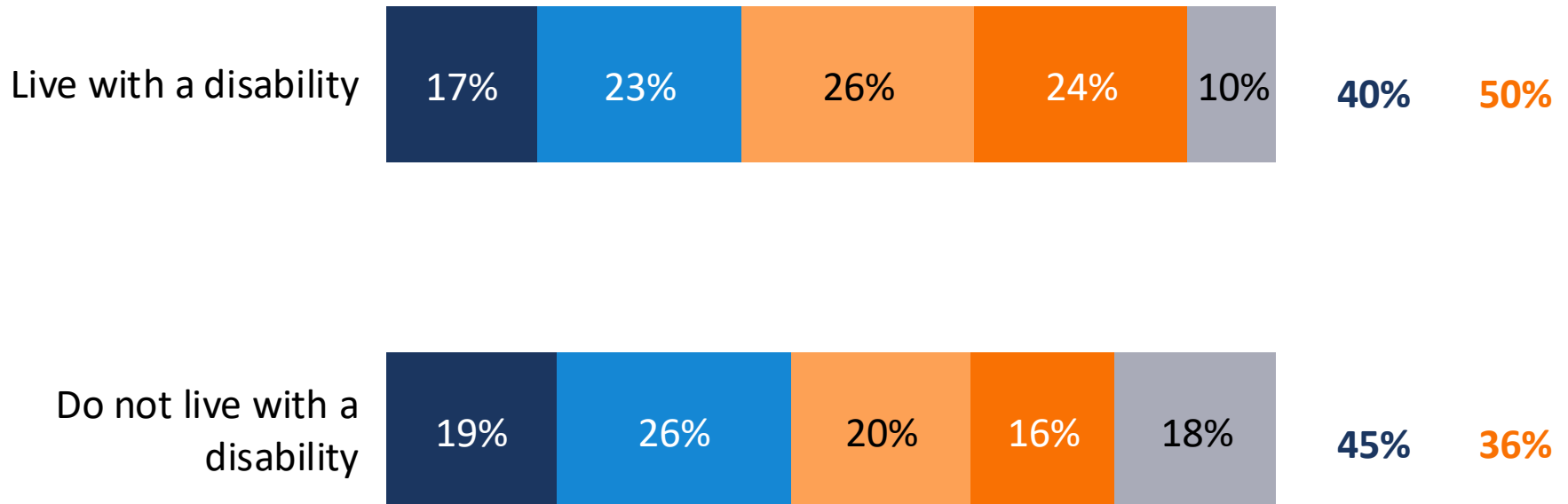|	■ Very Easy	■ Somewhat Easy	■ Somewhat Difficult	■ Very Difficult	■ Don't Know	**Total Easy**	**Total Difficult**
LGBTQ+	9%	17%	34%	36%		**26%**	**70%**
Non-LGBTQ+	19%	26%	21%	16%	18%	**45%**	**37%**

Q25. Is it easy or difficult to find or obtain care for your or your family's _mental_ health in your community?
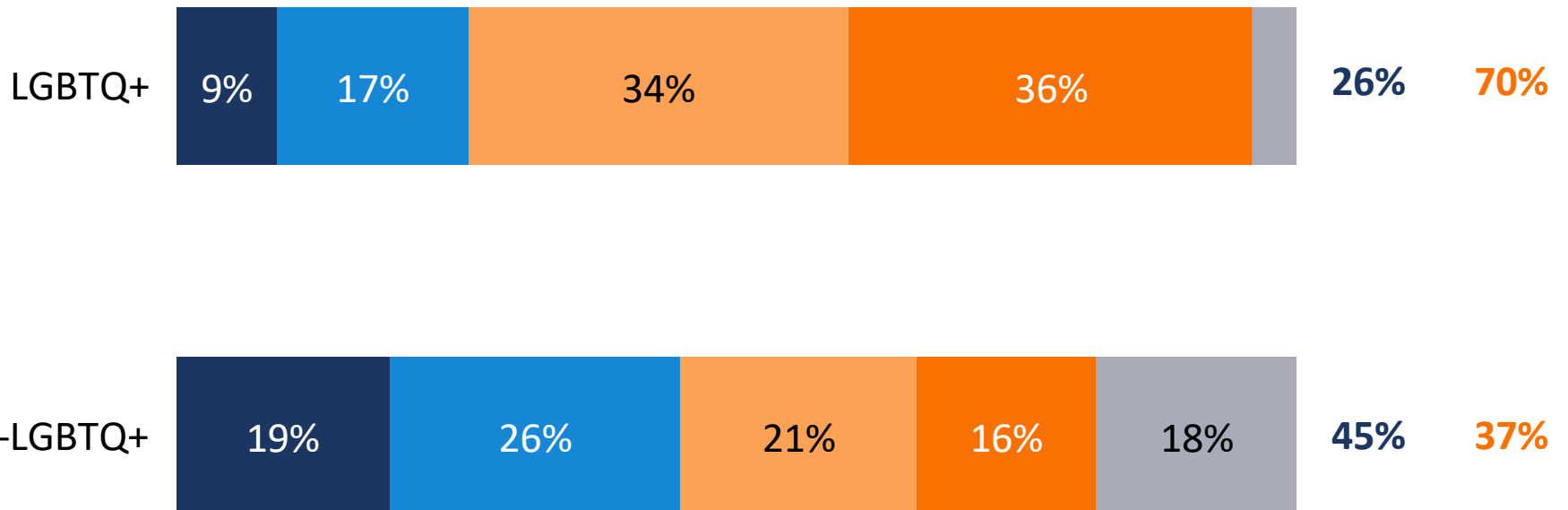
There is little difference in the experience of accessing mental healthcare by disability status.

by Live With a Disability

■ Very Easy ■ Somewhat Easy ■ Somewhat Difficult ■ Very Difficult ■ Don't Know

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know	Total Easy	Total Difficult
Live with a disability	17%	23%	26%	24%	10%	**40%**	**50%**
Do not live with a disability	19%	26%	20%	16%	18%	**45%**	**36%**

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

QualBoard participants were divided on how easy it is to access mental health care in rural areas.

- Challenges in accessing mental health care included cost, insurance coverage, availability of providers and distance to get care.
- In the QualBoards, few mentioned stigma, but logistical barriers were mentioned more often.
- However, participants in BIPOC focus groups noted stigma about seeking mental health treatment.

QualBoard Male: I don't have a problem getting an appointment at the VA hospital, but it will usually be in the 3-6 months time range for available appointments. So timing and drive time are difficult for me.

Springfield Female: I think there is also more stigma for mental health for men than there is for women… I think as a society, we still have a hard time talking about feelings and emotions.

QualBoard Female: It is very difficult to find and get care for mental health in our community. There is only one hospital within 30 minutes that has a behavioral unit. Male counselors that boys typically like to talk to are hard to find and have long wait lists for appointments.

Health Equity and the Social Determinants of Health

Participants agreed that not everyone has the same opportunities to be healthy or receives the same quality of care.

- Participants noted a wide range of circumstances that could affect one's ability to stay healthy and obtain healthcare – ranging from income, gender, and sexuality to whether they live in an urban or rural area.
- QualBoard participants thought that those living in rural areas had fewer opportunities to be healthy than those in other areas of Missouri.
- While only a few had firsthand experiences with discrimination in a healthcare setting, they acknowledged it was a problem.
- Focus group participants related stories of people having their concerns dismissed by providers based on cultural assumptions, or noted how language barriers could discourage both patient and provider from fully and effectively collaborating on care.

QualBoard Female: I know that race…has led to major differences in treatment. I have read several articles that discuss the different ways that people of different races are treated. I am thankful that I have not experienced that myself but it's disgusting that the color of someone's skin would change how they are treated.

St. Louis Female: I watched sometimes how doctors treated [my father] because he was a Black guy versus going to the doctor with my mom who is a white woman. They treated her different. They sometimes treated her better.

FM3 RESEARCH

NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

The concept of "health equity" was unfamiliar to participants in the qualitative sessions.

- In the focus groups, participants were uncertain about the term "health equity;" some connected it to financial equity and assumed it meant having savings to pay for healthcare.
- In the subsequent QualBoard sessions, the discussion was broken down further, into whether people have a "right to be healthy" and whether Missouri had a responsibility to close gaps in health.
- While there was general agreement on the concept that everyone should have opportunities to be healthy, participants were mixed on this topic and found it too abstract.
- Many also attributed health fundamentally to personal choices; even if they supported societal efforts to improve health and healthcare, they viewed it as primarily a personal responsibility.

Cape Girardeau BIPOC: I think of ways to take advantage and make some money because I'm healthy. I would build that equity in my health, like you build equity in your home. So how can I draw that equity down to feed my family.

QualBoard Female: I think that Missouri has government food programs that can help people be healthy, but they have to choose to buy healthy items.

Participants viewed health as something they had control over and a matter of personal choice.
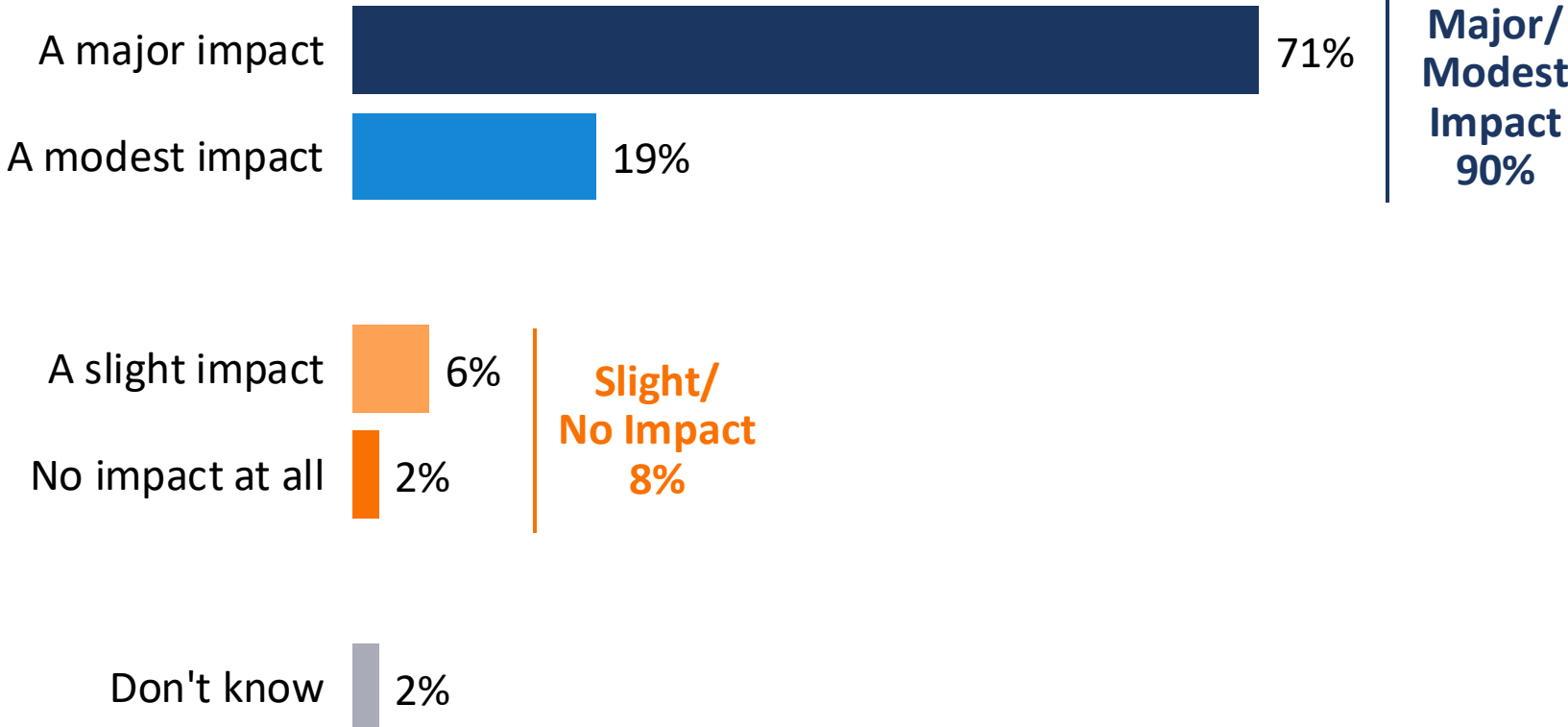
- Most participants, both in the focus groups and QualBoards, felt that their health was primarily a matter of their own choice, rather than factors outside their control.
- They acknowledged the importance of a person's environment and genetics, but majorities felt that their own decisions about what they ate, how much they exercised, how much they slept, and how they managed stress were up to them.

QualBoard Female: I have mostly control over being healthy; by that I mean I make the choices to eat healthy, to exercise and keep stress free. I have to make those choices for my children also, but at the same time companies like fast food ones make it hard; adding sugar to everything that companies make also makes it hard.

Hannibal Female: I see it as I have decisions to make, like I have control to make healthy decisions. I used to be a smoker; I chose not to smoke anymore. I choose not to drink to excess. I try to make healthier choices; I eat an apple instead of a processed snack. I choose to move my body and to do that. Now am I genetically pre-dispositioned for some things? Yes. But I think yes, I have control over my own health.

At the same time, seven in ten believe social determinants significantly impact a person's health.

Some people say that factors in society and their community can impact on a person's health: these include things like a person's household income; level of education; access to well-paying jobs or jobs that are not physically straining; quality housing; adequate retirement funds; and the amount of family stress. In general, how big an impact do you think that these factors have on a person's health:
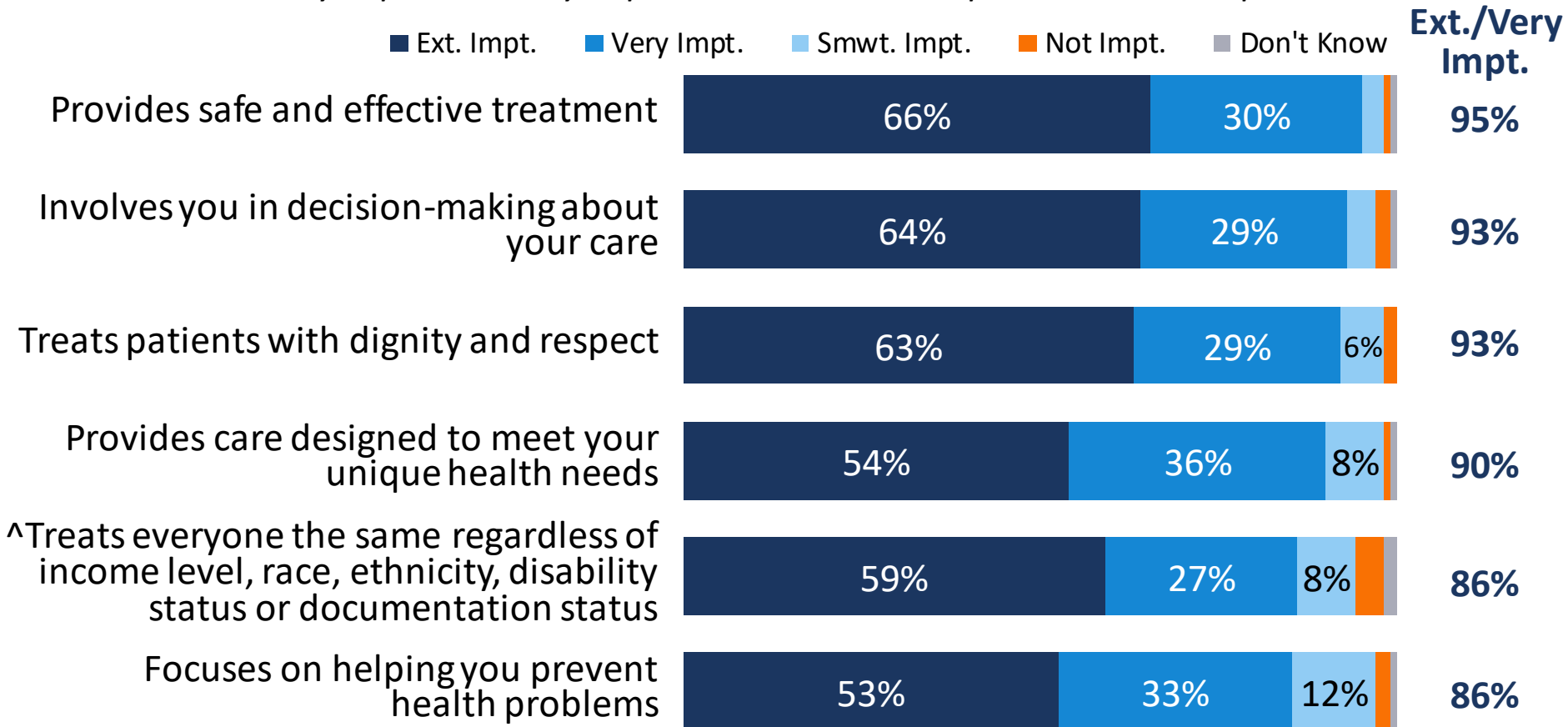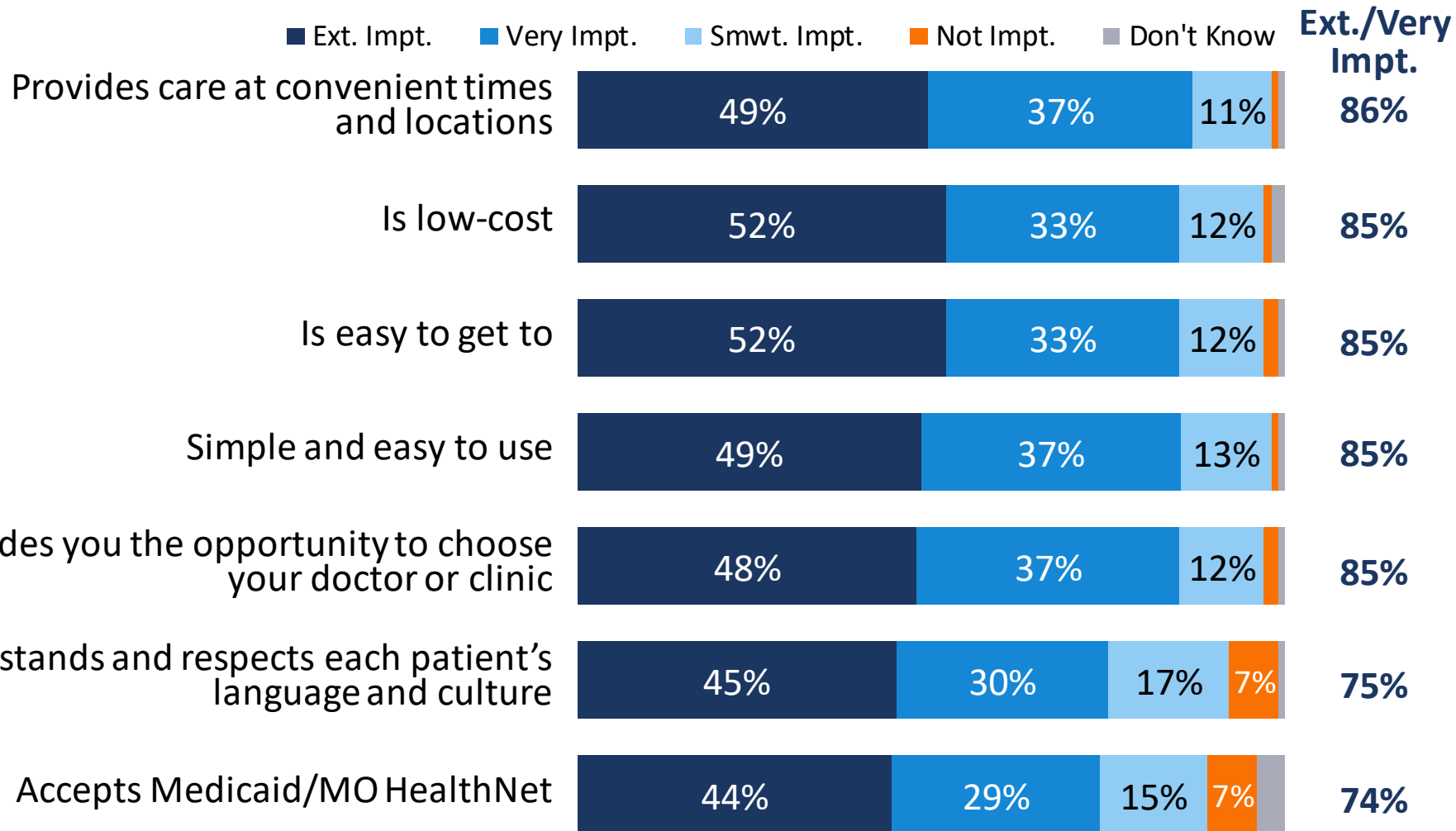
Response	Percent
A major impact	71%
A modest impact	19%
A slight impact	6%
No impact at all	2%
Don't know	2%

Major/ Modest Impact 90%

Slight/ No Impact 8%

Improving Health in Missouri

Missourians view safe and effective treatment, involvement in decision making, and dignity and respect as most important to high-quality healthcare.

Here is a list of possible characteristics of high-quality healthcare. Please tell me how important it is to you that healthcare in Missouri have that characteristic: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important?

	■ Ext. Impt.	■ Very Impt.	■ Smwt. Impt.	■ Not Impt.	■ Don't Know	**Ext./Very Impt.**
Provides safe and effective treatment	66%	30%				**95%**
Involves you in decision-making about your care	64%	29%				**93%**
Treats patients with dignity and respect	63%	29%	6%			**93%**
Provides care designed to meet your unique health needs	54%	36%	8%			**90%**
^Treats everyone the same regardless of income level, race, ethnicity, disability status or documentation status	59%	27%	8%			**86%**
Focuses on helping you prevent health problems	53%	33%	12%			**86%**

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Convenience and cost are also highly important to Missourians.

	Ext. Impt.	Very Impt.	Smwt. Impt.	Not Impt.	Don't Know	Ext./Very Impt.
Provides care at convenient times and locations	49%	37%	11%			86%
Is low-cost	52%	33%	12%			85%
Is easy to get to	52%	33%	12%			85%
Simple and easy to use	49%	37%	13%			85%
Provides you the opportunity to choose your doctor or clinic	48%	37%	12%			85%
Understands and respects each patient's language and culture	45%	30%	17%	7%		75%
Accepts Medicaid/MO HealthNet	44%	29%	15%	7%		74%

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African-Americans assign greater importance to all characteristics, but particularly being treated with dignity and respect.

Characteristic	Extremely Important			
	All Residents	Race/Ethnicity		
		Whites	African Americans	BIPOC
Provides safe and effective treatment	**66%**	65%	76%	67%
Involves you in decision-making about your care	**64%**	64%	75%	68%
Treats patients with dignity and respect	**63%**	63%	**81%**	65%
^Treats everyone the same regardless of income level, race, ethnicity, disability status or documentation status	**59%**	57%	75%	64%
Provides care designed to meet your unique health needs	**54%**	54%	70%	56%
Focuses on helping you prevent health problems	**53%**	53%	66%	53%
Is easy to get to	**52%**	50%	69%	61%
Is low-cost	**52%**	51%	64%	57%
Provides care at convenient times and locations	**49%**	47%	68%	56%
Simple and easy to use	**49%**	47%	68%	56%
Provides you the opportunity to choose your doctor or clinic	**48%**	46%	67%	57%
Understands and respects each patient's language and culture	**45%**	45%	57%	47%
Accepts Medicaid/MO HealthNet	**44%**	41%	65%	58%

Q29. Here is a list of possible characteristics of high-quality healthcare. Please tell me how important it is to you that healthcare in Missouri have that characteristic: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important?
^Not Part of Split Sample

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Women with a college degree are especially likely to view these characteristics as highly important.

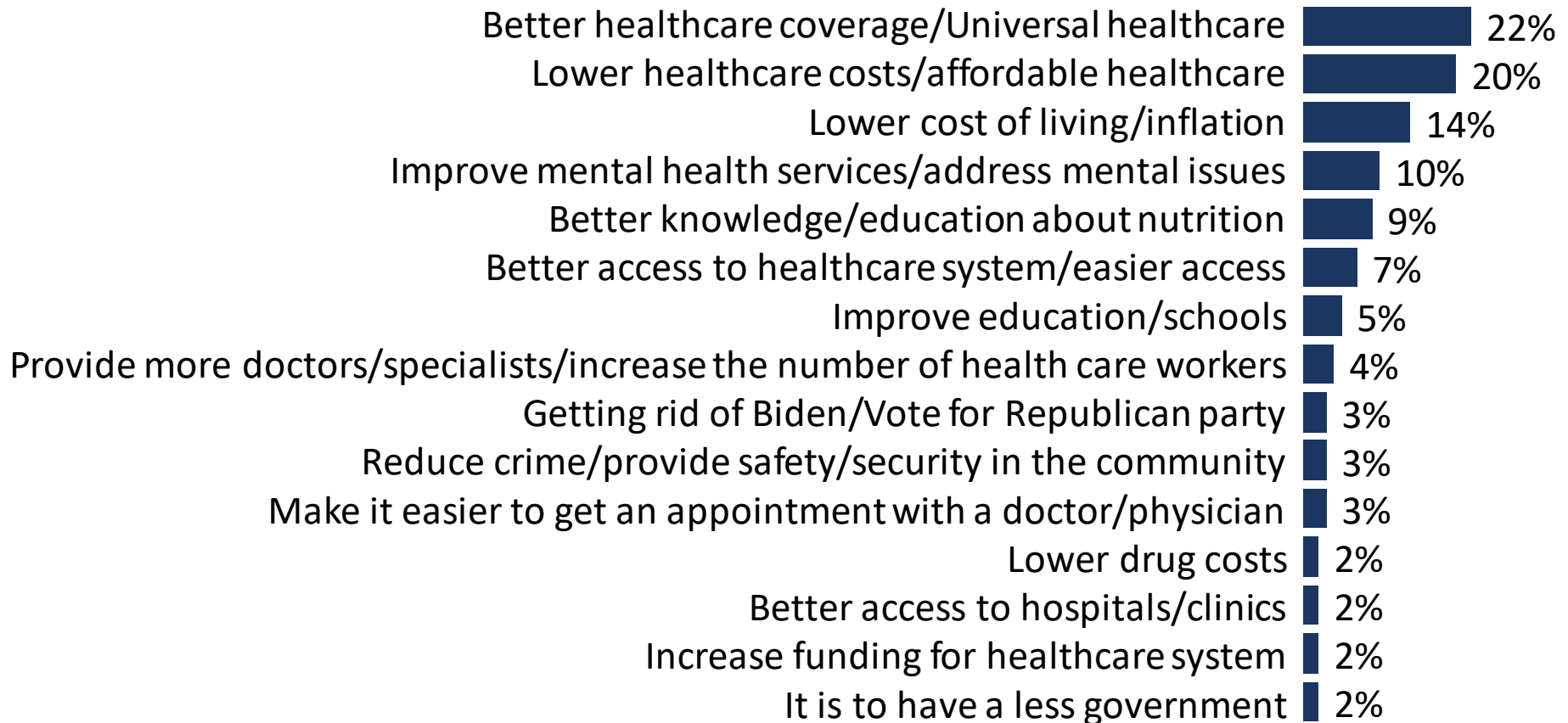| Characteristic	All Residents	Extremely Important			
		Men		Women	
		Non-College Educated	College-Educated	Non-College Educated	College-Educated
Provides safe and effective treatment	66%	59%	57%	69%	83%
Involves you in decision-making about your care	64%	55%	59%	71%	76%
Treats patients with dignity and respect	63%	54%	59%	70%	74%
^Treats everyone the same regardless of income level, race, ethnicity, disability status or documentation status	59%	50%	54%	65%	72%
Provides care designed to meet your unique health needs	54%	46%	51%	61%	62%
Focuses on helping you prevent health problems	53%	41%	52%	61%	62%
Is easy to get to	52%	43%	46%	62%	58%
Is low-cost	52%	50%	35%	57%	58%
Provides care at convenient times and locations	49%	43%	34%	56%	61%
Simple and easy to use	49%	43%	34%	53%	67%
Provides you the opportunity to choose your doctor or clinic	48%	43%	37%	53%	63%
Understands and respects each patient's language and culture	45%	35%	34%	52%	61%
Accepts Medicaid/MO HealthNet	44%	34%	43%	58%	43%

Q29. Here is a list of possible characteristics of high-quality healthcare. Please tell me how important it is to you that healthcare in Missouri have that characteristic: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important?
^Not Part of Split Sample

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Better healthcare coverage and lower costs are named the most important changes to improve health.

In a few words of your own, what is the most important change you think could be made to improve the health of all Missourians?
(Open-ended)

Response	%
Better healthcare coverage/Universal healthcare	22%
Lower healthcare costs/affordable healthcare	20%
Lower cost of living/inflation	14%
Improve mental health services/address mental issues	10%
Better knowledge/education about nutrition	9%
Better access to healthcare system/easier access	7%
Improve education/schools	5%
Provide more doctors/specialists/increase the number of health care workers	4%
Getting rid of Biden/Vote for Republican party	3%
Reduce crime/provide safety/security in the community	3%
Make it easier to get an appointment with a doctor/physician	3%
Lower drug costs	2%
Better access to hospitals/clinics	2%
Increase funding for healthcare system	2%
It is to have a less government	2%

Verbatim Comments on Improving Health in Missouri

I think it should be required that people on Medicaid should have a doctor and not use a hospital as their doctor.

I would say less government. If we have a more free-market system, that will help.

The cost of all health care needs to come down. Health care is too expensive.

I would say to increase resources for social programs such as access to transportation in rural areas.

It would be to have a more stable economy. It causes a lot of stress for people. Stress is really bad.

It would be better to have more mental health providers in Missouri. They should be treating mental health the same as physical health, insurance-wise, because it is frustrating that they tend to stop at the mechanics.

Universal health or an expansion of people that qualify for Medicaid benefits.

I want an increase in access to all types of health care, like Medicare. In all situations, health care should be low-cost, and we can easily get appointments that are scheduled soon and not months out.

Q27. In a few words of your own, what is the most important change you think could be made to improve the health of all Missourians?

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Making Change in Missouri

Volunteering, attending government meetings in person and meeting with elected officials were rated the most effective ways to better the community by participants in qualitative sessions.

Here is a list of ways someone could be involved. For each one, please indicate if you think this is very effective, somewhat effective, somewhat ineffective, or very effective at making a positive difference in the community.

Top Ways to Get Involved	Number of Participants Who Chose These As Effective	
	QualBoards	Focus Groups
Volunteering time for an organization active in the community	22	68
Taking time off from a job or school to work to volunteer time for a cause you really believe in	21	59
Attending a meeting of a government agency, such as a city council, planning commission, or school board	21	59.5
Meeting personally with an elected official	20	50
Making decisions about your diet, housing, or lifestyle based on your values	19	57.5
Signing a petition in person, such as at the door or in a parking lot	17	43
Attending a protest, rally, or demonstration	16	36
Donating money to an organization active in public policy	15	53
Writing a letter to a public official	15	26
Sending an email or other online communication to a public official	14	25
Making decisions about whether or not to purchase something based on the values of the company that made it	12	44

Comments on the Most Important Change to Improve Life in Missouri

QualBoard Female: I think some form of affordable public transportation is the most important need for my community. Affordable public transportation would allow the elderly and handicapped to get to the store, the doctor, church services, and socialization opportunities. Young people would be able to get to places of employment without the added stress on a parent with the family car.

QualBoard Female: The drug/opioid crisis needs to be tackled head on, zero tolerance. This is the source of most crime and mental illness, as well as physical illness.

Cape Girardeau Feamle: Police officers being able to do their jobs without fear of losing their job so that crime is down. Making healthcare cheaper so more people are able to get access to healthcare.

Hannibal Male: Personal outreach in awareness and seeking common ground to help one another as individuals and as a community.

Springfield Male: The housing of the homeless, and increased opportunities to improve the lives of the homeless would effect the overall crime rating of the community, as well las making health coverage more affordable.

FM3 RESEARCH NEW BRIDGE STRATEGY

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